THE CHINESE SHORT STORY IN 1979:

AN INTERPRETATION BASED ON OFFICIAL AND NONOFFICIAL LITERARY JOURNALS

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Abstract

The short story has been an important genre in 20th century Chinese literature. By its very nature the short story affords the writer the opportunity to introduce swiftly any developments in ideology, theme or style. Scholars have interpreted Chinese fiction published during 1979 as indicative of a "change" in the development of 20th century Chinese literature. This study examines a number of short stories from 1979 in order to determine the extent of that "change".

The first two chapters concern the establishment of a representative database and the adoption of viable methods of interpretation. An important, although much neglected, phenomenon in the make-up of 1979 literature are the works which appeared in so-called "nonofficial" journals. In order to provide a more complete picture of the short story in 1979, the database is comprised of works from one "nonofficial" and two "official" literary journals. Differences and/or similarities between the two types of short story are highlighted.

The main body of this study is divided into four further chapters, each of which concerns a separate aspect of the short stories. These chapters discuss each aspect with regard to literary development and sociohistorical influences. These aspects include the presentation of themes, subject matter and character; the use of imagery and language; narrative form and plot chronology; and the types of narrative mode explored by the writers. The study is concluded by an evaluation of the Chinese short story in 1979, emphasizing the degrees of continuity and/or innovation it exhibits.

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To my wife, Ningli, I owe a special debt of gratitude which is hard to put into words. The sacrifices she has made and the inspiration she has provided in the conception, writing and revision of this thesis will be forever appreciated. I dedicate this thesis to her.

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1.1 PRELIMINARY REMARKS

The year 1979 was both a confused and confusing period in Chinese literature. It was a year in which many writers sought greater leeway within - and in certain cases outside - officially established cultural limits. It was also a year which was important for "the opening up of possibilities" in the literary realm.[1] Yet what did these "possibilities" represent? Was the literature published during 1979 indicative of a continuity in literary forms established in 20th century China, especially those of the Maoist era? Or was it indicative of a new direction for Chinese literature, one marked by innovation and experimentation?

An examination of the Chinese short story from 1979 should provide an answer to these questions. In the post-Mao period the short story was undoubtedly in the vanguard of literary creation and publication. An official definition of the time described the short story as literature's "light cavalry" (qing qibing) and "shock brigade" (tujidui).[2] Western critics also attached importance to the role of the short story in the years directly

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[1]W.J.F. Jenner, "1979: A New Start for Literature in China?," China Quarterly, 86, Summer 1981, p.301.

[2]Xinshiqi wenxue liunian 1976.10-1982.9 (Six Years of New Period Literature October 1976 - September 1982), Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1985, p.143.

succeeding the Cultural Revolution. For example, writing in late 1978, Geremie Barmé claimed that the short story was "the most promising field of cultural activity since 1976."[3]

In order to conduct an examination of short stories from 1979, certain parameters need to be established. Before outlining precisely how this examination is to be conducted, exactly what is to be examined requires clarification. This necessitates a narrowing down of parameters from the general to the particular. The year 1979 should be placed in a historical context, emphasizing both its position in the development of Chinese literature and also the sociopolitical events which influenced the development of literature during that year. Secondly, the short story should be set against this background. This should be coupled with an explanation for the singling out of the short story, rather than any other literary genre, for particular assessment. Finally, a workable database should be established in order to facilitate an assessment of 1979 short stories. Above all, this database should draw on a number of different sources of short stories, thereby preparing the ground for a more representative interpretation of the material.

1.2 THE ORIGINS OF A "NEW" LITERATURE

By 1979 the move towards a "new" literature was already being heralded by Chinese theorists. Tracing the origins of this "new" literature - of

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[3]Geremie Barmé, "Flowers or More Weeds? Culture in China since the Fall of the 'Gang of Four'," Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs, January 1979, p.130.

which the short stories of 1979 were an integral part - should shed light on the motivating forces behind "official" literature (i.e. that which was published in journals sanctioned by the literary authorities) and "nonofficial" literature (i.e. that which appeared in the journals of the Democracy Movement 1978-79).

According to most orthodox PRC (People's Republic of China) critics, "new period literature" (xinshiqi wenxue) was ushered in by "literature of the scars" (shanghen wenxue).[4] While it may be argued that, both in terms of volume published and the debate it provoked, "literature of the scars" dominated the Chinese literary arena for most of 1978, its position in the vanguard of "new period literature" seems to stem from political, rather than literary, criteria. The term "new period literature" is in itself politically loaded. "New period" refers to a much broader socio-historical spectrum than literature. It has been described by one Chinese literary theorist as the "new historical period" beginning after the fall of the Gang of Four in October 1976 "when a historical turning point brought with it a comprehensive change in social life."[5]

This "turning point" was marked by an ideology which served a dual purpose. On the one hand it engaged in a bitter invective against the Gang of Four, which was held responsible for all the evils of the Cultural Revolution period. On the other hand it promoted post-Cultural Revolution

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[4]Zhang Zhong, ed., Dangdai zhongguo wenxue gaiguan (General Survey of Contemporary Chinese Literature), Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1986, p.479ff.; Chen Huangmei, ed., Zhongguo dangdai wenxueshi chugao (First Draft of Contemporary Chinese Literary History), Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1986, p.337ff.

[5]Zhang Zhong, p.479.

society in a positive light, declaring that the scars of the past would soon be healed and that the Chinese people would never have to suffer again. As the plotlines and messages of "literature of the scars" concorded with the ideological line of the new historical period, it soon found itself the spearhead of "new period literature". This concordance was more a question of design than coincidence. It is therefore unsurprising that "literature of the scars" should have been referred to as nothing more than "another predictable instance of the leadership's manipulation of the arts."[6]

Short stories later to be labelled "literature of the scars" did not appear in print until over a year after the Gang of Four was toppled from power. This was presumably because writers and editors were fearful to act until the political line of the new regime had been established.[7] Liu Xinwu's "Ban zhuren" (The Class Teacher), which may be described as the prototype of "literature of the scars", appeared in November 1977. "The Class Teacher" was promoted by the editorial board of Renmin wenxue (People's Literature) as an example of the new style of fiction the literary authorities deemed desirable. The themes broached by Liu Xinwu, most importantly the physical and psychological scars left by the Cultural Revolution, were explored in a large number of short stories published

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[6]Bonnie S. McDougall, "Writers and Performers, Their Works and Their Audiences in the First Three Decades," in McDougall, ed., Popular Chinese Literature and Performing Arts in the People's Republic of China 1949-1979, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984, p.301.

[7]He Yuhuai accurately points out that the works of Taiwanese author Chen Ruoxi, who lived in the PRC during the Cultural Revolution years, are perhaps the first examples of a "literature of the scars". These works were published in Hong Kong rather than in the PRC, but share many similarities with "literature of the scars". See He Yuhuai, Cycles of Repression and Relaxation: Politico-Literary Events in China 1976-1989, Bochum: Brockmeyer, 1992, p.73.

during 1978. It was only after the publication of Shanghai student Lu Xinhua's "Shanghen" (The Scar) in August 1978 that the term "literature of the scars" began to be applied, initially pejoratively, to similarly themed fictional works.

In terms of mechanics, "literature of the scars" failed to differ from literature of the Cultural Revolution period in any great degree. It continued to be politically motivated with its moral and prescriptive lines very clearly defined. The obvious difference was that the roles of the negative and positive characters had been reversed. The positive camp was now occupied by teachers, scientists and technicians, and the negative camp by the once "heroic" cadres who had adhered to the Gang of Four's political line during the Cultural Revolution. This difference is perhaps not so remarkable when one bears in mind that characters continued to be drawn in terms of black and white stereotypes. Although the content of the message delivered by "literature of the scars" was the exact opposite of that prescribed during the Cultural Revolution - and therefore truly representative of the "new period" - the manner in which this message was structured remained unaltered.

"Literature of the scars" infringed some previous cultural taboos. Most notably it gave rise to debates on whether it was acceptable to write about the negative aspects of Chinese society, and whether tragedy was possible under socialism. However, as "literature of the scars" appeared in literary accompaniment to the official appraisal of social conditions during the Cultural Revolution, the negative aspects and tragedies depicted were clearly the result of policies practised by the Gang of Four. As Marián

Gálik has written, "literature of the scars" had a "firmly fixed framework of reference" which failed to "go beyond the alleged zone of action of Lin Biao and the Gang of Four."[8] Moreover, without exception the stories concluded with optimistic faith in the new leadership. This commonly took the form of a "bright tail" (guangming weiba) - a happy ending which painted a rosy picture of post-Cultural Revolution society.

Despite all its shortcomings, "literature of the scars" prepared the ground for the short stories which dominated official literature throughout 1979 in a number of ways. Firstly, it inspired Chinese writers to examine their nation's involvement in the Cultural Revolution and to come to terms with the scars left by it. Secondly, it reintroduced an element of "realism" into contemporary Chinese fiction. Thirdly, and arguably most importantly, it motivated both would-be and established writers to begin publishing on a larger scale.

Although orthodox literary theorists have claimed that "new period literature" commenced after the fall of the Gang of Four, there were literary precursors to "literature of the scars" which suggested that a dissatisfaction with social policy percolated beneath the surface of Cultural Revolution society. Writing in 1993, the literary critic Li Tuo argues:

> Many critics and historians of contemporary Chinese literature have tended to regard the appearance of so-called "wound" or "scar" literature in 1978 as the beginning of a new literary era. I am of a different view, primarily because although "scar" literature did possess a certain critical quality, its language nevertheless remained Maoist, and there was little if any change in the underlying system of meanings.[9]

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[8]Marián Gálik, "Some Remarks on 'Literature of the Scars' in the PRC (1977-1979)," Asian and African Studies, XVIII, 1982, p.68.

In his study of politico-literary events in the post-Mao era, which was conceived and published in the West, He Yuhuai traces the birth of this literature to the demonstrations of April 1976.[10] During the demonstrations in mourning for Zhou Enlai, poems which had been written in clandestine circumstances during the early years of the Cultural Revolution were read out in Beijing's Tian'anmen Square, chalked on the surrounding pavements and inscribed over wreaths. Before the fall of the Gang of Four, these poems were banned and their writers detained. However, in line with a re-evaluation of the demonstrations, which was conducted by the regime of the "new period" in late 1978, the poems were collated and officially published.[11]

With the benefit of hindsight, the poems could be recognized as "legitimate" precursors of "literature of the scars" because their tone coincided with the new regime's anti-Gang of Four stance. This led to certain Chinese critics referring to the poetry as "the clarion call of a new literary dawn."[12] These poems could not have been written in anticipation of an imminent "new literary dawn". They are perhaps best perceived as part of an "underground" literary movement which reflected the grass roots view of Chinese society.

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[9]Li Tuo, "The New Vitality of Modern Chinese," in Wendy Larson and Anne Wedell-Wedellsborg, eds., Inside Out: Modernism and Postmodernism in Chinese Literary Culture, Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1993, p.74.

[10]He Yuhuai, p.73.

[11]See Tong Huaizhou, ed., Tian'anmen shichao (Tian'anmen Poems), Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1978. The cover of the volume was adorned with the calligraphy of then CCP chairman Hua Guofeng, emphasizing official endorsement of the poems collated therein.

[12]Zhu Zhai, ed., Zhongguo dangdai wenxue sichaoshi (History of Contemporary Chinese Literary Thought), Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1987, p.516.

There is no doubt that an "underground" literature was in circulation in China from at least the early 1970s. Many of the poems publicly aired at Tian'anmen Square in April 1976, for instance, had been composed and circulated at the grass roots level for a number of years. Bonnie McDougall has written that the post-Cultural Revolution literary thaw began before the fall of the Gang of Four, and that China's contemporary literature had its immediate origins not in "literature of the scars" but in the underground literature of the early 1970s.[13]

So-called underground literature consisted mostly of hand-copied literary works which were bound together with string into volumes known as shouchaoben ("hand-written volumes"). Shouchaoben were circulated secretly and, once in circulation, frequently became irrecoverable. Readers would often re-copy a text themselves, typically revising sections of it. The authors and readers of shouchaoben were generally of distinct social groups: intellectuals in urban areas or rusticated youths, including those who had returned to the cities.[14] Due to the widespread practice of recopying shouchaoben, the original authors were often impossible to trace. Furthermore, many of them had written under a pseudonym in the first place. Nevertheless, works were still withheld from the authorities as a

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[13]See Bonnie S. McDougall, "Writers and Performers," p.297; "Breaking Through: Literature and the Arts in China, 1976-1986," Copenhagen Papers in East and Southeast Asian Studies, 1.88 (1988), p.35; and her review of Elly Hagenaar's Stream of Consciousness and Free Indirect Discourse in Modern Chinese Literature which appeared in the Bulletin of the British Association for Chinese Studies, 1992, pp.42-3.

[14]Bonnie S. McDougall, "Dissent Literature: Official and Nonofficial Literature in and about China in the Seventies," Contemporary China, Vol.3 No.4, Winter 1979, p.57. McDougall lists three possible social groups which circulated underground literature: (i) disaffected youth, (ii) old revolutionary generals' poetry clubs and (iii) intellectuals.

precaution, for circulating unsanctioned literature was a punishable offence.

The rusticated author created in relative freedom. The peasants usually left the rurally incompatible "urbanites" to their own devices, which allowed them the opportunity to write full-length novels. The urban returnees, however, were forced to write spasmodically and in clandestine environments: parks, libraries or even the homes of high-level cadres.[15] John Gittings reports how Zhao Zhenkai (Bei Dao) was forced to write his novella "Bodong" (Waves) in straitened circumstances. Zhao apparently took advantage of his position as photographer on a construction site to disappear from time to time into a hut he had designated a darkroom in order to write. When he later rented a room in the Beijing suburbs, Zhao was discovered by a representative of the neighbourhood committee and was once more compelled to flee.[16]

The best-known shouchaoben may be described as upholding a "political philosophy" (zhengzhi zhexue). They portrayed the social despondency among those young people whose adolescence had been marred by extreme political fanaticism.[17] What these young writers had experienced as Red Guards and the reality of rural life which greeted them as they were rusticated were stimuli for their literary creativity. They were motivated, it seems, by an urge to write about life as they knew it. As one underground

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[15]McDougall, "Dissent Literature," p.57.

[16]John Gittings, China Changes Face: The Road from Revolution 1949-1989, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989, pp.152-153.

[17]Liu Dawen, Zhongguo wenxue xinchao 1976-1987 (The New Wave of Chinese Literature 1976-1987), Hong Kong: Dangdai wenyi chubanshe, 1988, p.182.

writer has commented: "In writing down these flawed yet sincere words... I wasn't writing fiction. I was merely offering up a heart which did not lie."[18]

One of the most widely documented examples of political philosophy underground fiction is Xiangjiang hong (The Xiang River Is Red), a several hundred page long novel written in 1971-2 by a middle school graduate rusticated to Hunan. The novel, allegedly based on an actual event, traces the psychological deterioration of a Red Guard from a revolutionary zealot to a suicidal pessimist, when he realizes that his efforts to overthrow Party bureaucrats have been in vain.[19] Another popular shouchaoben, Jin Fan's "Gongkai de qingshu" (Open Love Letters), explores the Cultural Revolution, the love and ideals of a disaffected youth, and the fate of the Chinese nation through a series of letters written during the spring and summer of 1970.[20] A number of the longer shouchaoben eventually succeeded in gaining official publication following their appearance in nonofficial journals during the 1978-79 Democracy Movement.

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[18]Quoted from Liu Dawen, p.55.

[19]There seems to be some discrepancy in the length of the novel, doubtless arising from the different versions circulated at different times. Bonnie S. McDougall reports the length as 200 pages ("Underground Literature: Two Reports from Hong Kong," Contemporary China, Vol.3 No.4, Winter 1979, p.84); Fox Butterfield reports the length as 400 pages ("An Underground Literature of Dissent Emerging in China," New York Times, 13 December 1977, p.8).

[20]The novella was originally circulated as a shouchaoben in March 1972. It reappeared in the Hangzhou nonofficial journal Women (Us) in early 1979. The story was eventually published in Shiyue (October), No.1 1980, pp.4-67.

Aside from the psychosocial influences on the writers of political philosophy shouchaoben, were there any literary influences on their creations? Bei Dao, who began creating both poetry and fiction in this underground form, claims that underground literature was "more or less" influenced by what he has termed "the translation style".[21] This was the style exhibited in translations of contemporary Western literature (Kafka, Camus, Sartre, Salinger, Kerouac etc.) published in the early 1960s. Although the translations were officially restricted to purchase by senior cadres, their unofficial circulation at the grass roots level during the Cultural Revolution, especially among rusticated students, ensured that they became "a necessary basis for the birth of underground literature."[22] Chen Maiping, who also began writing in the underground form, claims to have been influenced by more traditional literature: Lu Xun, Tolstoy, Turgenev and Dostoevsky, the works of whom he read in secret while rusticated to Inner Mongolia.[23]

Much of the fiction appearing in shouchaoben was aimed at a "popular" (tongsu) readership. It shared a similar function with the Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies School (yuanyang hudie pai) of fiction which had flourished in urban centres in the first quarter of the 20th century. Both trends

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[21]Bei Dao, "Translation Style: A Quiet Revolution" in Wendy Larson and Anne Wedell-Wedellsborg, eds., Inside Out: Modernism and Postmodernism in Chinese Literary Culture, Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1993, p.64.

[22]Bei Dao, p.63. Bei Dao continues by writing that these translations not only opened up "completely new horizons" for the writers of underground literature, but, more importantly, "they found a mature Chinese language style which was totally different from the official discourse."

[23]Quoted from a personal letter to me dated 14 May 1992. Chen states that he was lucky enough to befriend a doctor who had a cache of all the "classics" of Russian literature and who was willing to lend out his "treasures".

provided an outlet for "comforting entertainment fiction" during periods of social instability and psychological pressure.[24] Both trends also consisted of a large number of detective mysteries and tales of romance. Among the shouchaoben there were stories of espionage and terrorism, such as "Meihua dang" (Plum Blossom Party), which told of a KMT spy network led by the widow of Liu Shaoqi; and stories of a detectives such as "Zhuguangchang de pashou" (Pickpocket in Pearl Square), which recounted a case of theft in an international setting at the first Guangzhou Trade Fair in 1972.[25]

Far from the classical-style love stories of Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies Fiction, the stories of love in shouchaoben attest more to a youth coming to terms with suppressed sexuality. These works included references to prostitution, such as the short story "A Xia" (Ah Xia), in which a young Shanghai woman becomes a prostitute in order to seek revenge on the lover who spurned her. Moreover, "innocent" romances were often corrupted by subsequent copiers into out-and-out pornography. A typical example would be "Shaonü zhi xin" (A Young Girl's Heart), which in the hands of unscrupulous copiers became an exercise in erotica under the changed title of "Manna huiyilu" (Memoirs of Manna). In 1973 an intensive police investigation was mounted to track down those responsible for the story's conception.[26]

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[24]E. Perry Link, Jr., Mandarin Ducks and Butterflies: Popular Fiction in Early Twentieth Century Chinese Cities, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981, p.236.

[25]Liu Dawen, p.182.

[26]Liu Dawen, p.182.

By the late 1970s the "market" for shouchaoben declined as official literary journals increased in number. At the beginning of 1976, months before the fall of the Gang of Four, a number of national literary journals were (re-)inaugurated. People were asked to hand over their shouchaoben to the authorities - a request to which many acceded. As a direct result, the circulation of official literary journals further increased.[27] Most of the stories appearing in shouchaoben were never actually published and remained in private circulation in the hand-copied form. Their accessibility to much of the reading public was highly limited, thereby restricting their potential influence.

More importantly, shouchaoben appeared as entertaining literature, emerging separately from, rather than as a part of, the officially perceived linear development of contemporary literature from the forms of the Cultural Revolution to "literature of the scars". The orthodox Chinese concept of fictional development dictates that one literary period emerges from, and replaces, the preceding one.[28] From this viewpoint, and also because they were implicitly banned, the influence of shouchaoben on "literature of the scars" and other literary genres has been suppressed by Chinese literary historians.

It would be too simplistic to state that shouchaoben had no influence on the officially acclaimed "literature of the scars", or that "literature of the scars" had no influence on the nonofficial fiction of the Democracy

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[27]Link, Mandarin Ducks, p.242.

[28]Milena Doleželová-Velingerová, ed., "Understanding Chinese Fiction 1900-1949", A Selective Guide to Chinese Literature 1900-1949: Volume One: The Novel, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1989, pp.18-19.

Movement. It would also be erroneous to suppose that shouchaoben only influenced nonofficial fiction. While it is true that many of the original authors of shouchaoben were the same rusticated young people who contributed fiction and poetry to nonofficial journals, the Tian'anmen poems, which shared similar anti-Gang of Four sentiments to "literature of the scars", were also created in equally clandestine circumstances. Many of the nonofficial and a number of the underground works of fiction also touched upon the scars of recent history. The mutual influence of all these literary forms is significant. The political philosophy literature of shouchaoben began analysing a grass roots disaffection with social policies of the day. This disaffection exploded into the anger of the Tian'anmen poems. Once this anger had been officially directed against the Gang of Four, "literature of the scars" was able to voice similar sentiments in officially sanctioned literary works.

1.3 1979: A YEAR IN SOCIO-LITERARY RETROSPECT

In order to appreciate better the sociopolitical make-up of 1979, it is necessary to analyse two political events occurring towards the end of 1978. These events both exerted an influence on the later course of Chinese politics and literature.

On 15 November 1978 the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) made public its re-evaluation of the official verdict condemning the April 1976 Tian'anmen Square demonstrations. This re-evaluation was not only a direct attack on Hua Guofeng, whose accession to the premiership had been occasioned by the alleged "counterrevolutionary" nature of the demonstrations but, more

importantly, it signalled the official endorsement of a spontaneous political act.[29]

Between 18 and 22 December the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the CCP was held in Beijing. The two major conclusions of the plenum were that (i) the mass movement to criticize the Gang of Four had basically concluded, and (ii) the focus of the nation was to shift from political campaigns to socialist modernization. The plenum also saw a rise in influence of the "reformist" faction around Deng Xiaoping. As Deng had originally been held responsible for instigating the demonstrations in April 1976, his exoneration and increase in power was clearly a further attack against Hua Guofeng.[30] The promise of a more open future under the policies championed by Deng Xiaoping and his supporters - marked by the slogans "emancipate the mind" (jiefang sixiang) and "seek the truth from facts" (shishi qiushi) - was the key factor in politics and literature as 1979 dawned.

The tone of the Third Plenum added to the momentum of the Democracy Movement which had developed following the re-evaluation of the Tian'anmen

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[29]Peter R. Moody, Jr., Chinese Politics after Mao: Development and Liberalization 1976-1983, New York: Praeger, 1983, p.59.

[30]Moody, p.60; Cheng Jin draws the following conclusions on the Third Plenum: "The Party thus gained the initiative in setting things right and was able to solve step by step many problems left over since the founding of the People's Republic and the new problems cropping up in the course of practice to carry out the heavy tasks of construction and reform. As a result, an excellent situation was brought about in both the economic and political spheres." (A Chronology of the People's Republic of China 1949-1984, Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1986, p.69). Cheng's comments reflect the typically upbeat assessment of the Third Plenum which characterizes official PRC historical accounts. The objectivity of such comments must remain in doubt.

demonstrations. In the last weeks of November 1978 the wall-poster (dazibao) began to reappear on the streets of Beijing. Popular discontent went hand in hand with Deng Xiaoping's political revival as he gave specific endorsements to popular checks against the leftist establishment around Hua Guofeng. Consequently, the posters denounced the Hua regime for not having improved the social system since the Cultural Revolution, and supported Deng's carefully worded promises of liberalization. Viewing mushrooming popular discontent as an opportunity to win legitimacy for his "reformist" faction, Deng overtly supported the movement by claiming that the right to publish by means of wall posters was guaranteed by the Constitution.[31] Thereafter, mass rallies began to gather daily at the self-styled "Democracy Wall" (minzhu qiang) at Xidan in the capital. The momentum of the movement accelerated, and activists viewed the openness implied at the Third Plenum as an opportunity to demand political and literary democracy during the last months of 1978 and the first months of 1979.

The so-called "Beijing Spring" was not restricted to the sphere of spontaneous nonofficial writing. Before December 1978 any perceived liberalization in the field of literature had been slow and partial. As early as May 1978 Huang Zhen, Minister of Culture, had spoken of a "new tide of socialist culture" in the fields of literature and the arts. However, 1978 was dominated by "literature of the scars" which hardly represented the "new tide" Huang Zhen had visualized. The Chinese literary scene failed to

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[31]James D. Seymour, ed., The Fifth Modernization: China's Human Rights Movements 1978-1979, New York: Human Rights Press, 1980, p.13.

adopt the anticipated "degree of liveliness" until after the Third Plenum of December 1978.[32]

Despite the decisive change marked by the Third Plenum, literary development during 1979 failed to follow a smooth course. Following bold writings in both official and nonofficial publications during the first three months of the year - the "Beijing Spring" was at its height in late winter - by late spring and early summer a backlash against the new tide had been launched. This backlash stemmed from varied interpretations of a speech given by Deng Xiaoping at the National Conference of Theoretical Work to Discuss Ideological Guidelines on 30 March.[33] Deng's call for all areas of society to uphold the "four fundamental principles" (sixiang jiben yuanze) - the socialist road, dictatorship of the proletariat, leadership of the CCP, and Marxist-Leninist-Maoist thought - indicated that a much less tolerant wind was already in the ascendancy. Wei Jingsheng, probably the most famous activist of the "Beijing Spring", was actually arrested the day before Deng delivered his speech. The anticipated ramifications of such a move in the cultural sphere gave rise to a resurgence of literary criticism finding fault largely with "literature of the scars".[34] However, by the end

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[32]David S.G. Goodman, "PRC Fiction and its Political Context, 1978-1982: To Write the Word of 'Man' across the Sky," in Helmut Martin, ed., Cologne Workshop 1984 on Contemporary Chinese Literature, Köln: Deutsche Welle, 1986, p.127.

[33]Deng Xiaoping, "Jianchi sixiang jiben yuanze" (Uphold the Four Fundamental Principles), Deng Xiaoping wenxuan 1975-1982 (Selected Writings of Deng Xiaoping 1975-1982), Jiangsu: Renmin chubanshe, 1983, pp.144-170. Despite the restrictive tone of the "four fundamental principles", Deng's speech continued to champion the more "liberal" lines of emancipating the mind and seeking truth from facts.

[34]The two most important articles were: Huang Ansi, "Xiangqian kan a wenyi" (Look Forward Literature and Art), Guangzhou ribao (Guangzhou Daily), 15 April 1979, p.3; Li Jian, "'Gede' yu 'quede'" ('Praising Virtue' and 'Lacking Virtue'), Hebei wenyi (Hebei Literature and Art), June 1979.

of July a number of critics had condemned these conservative diatribes and sent their writers into rapid retreat. Evidently the changes of December 1978 had been substantial enough to permit such a swift and powerful counter-attack.

Late summer and early autumn were again seasons of relative literary openness. What has been described as "the most impressive harvest of exploratory writing hitherto in the PRC" appeared during these months.[35] By early winter 1979 it had become clear that the authorities were attempting both to stifle nonofficial expression and to enhance the reputation of the official media. While the official journals continued to carry exploratory works, restrictions on the nonofficial press grew tighter. Earlier in the year the CCP hierarchy had been too preoccupied with internal conflicts and increasing prestige abroad to exert complete control over literary and political expression. At the outset, encouragement of these nonofficial expressions was beneficial to Deng Xiaoping's "reformist" faction. As this faction gradually consolidated its power, however, continuing cries from the democracy activists became both embarrassing and a liability. Towards the end of 1979 many, but not all, of the nonofficial journals had been forcibly closed down.[36]

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[35]Rudolf G. Wagner, Inside a Service Trade: Studies in Contemporary Chinese Prose, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992, p.445.

[36]A number of nonofficial journals whose motivation was literary rather than political found themselves able to continue. Democracy Wall itself was closed down in December and moved to a small park where it could be better supervised by the authorities. See Michael S. Duke, "The Second Blooming of the Hundred Flowers: Chinese Literature in the Post-Mao Era," in Mason Y.H. Yang, Perspectives in Contemporary Chinese Literature, Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, 1983, p.13; Kjeld Erik Brodsgaard, "The Democracy Movement in China, 1978-1979: Opposition Movements, Wall Poster Campaigns and Underground Journals," Asian Survey, July 1981, pp.747-774.

The Fourth National Congress of Writers and Artists, which was promoted in official circles as being the crowning glory of literary liberalization in 1979, was convened in Beijing between 30 October and 16 November. More than three thousand delegates were in attendance. However, as Howard Goldblatt makes clear:

> Formal gatherings of Chinese writers and artists and their leaders... are significant events, not because that is where literary and artistic policy is determined (hardly anyone believes that), but because it is often where it is aired publicly and where it is discussed, supported and ultimately approved by the rank and file.[37]

At the Fourth Congress the authorities were forced to juggle the demands for unprecedented freedoms on the part of many writers with their own desire to promote stability and unity through the Four Fundamental Principles. The authorities therefore declared that the push for literary freedom could only continue if it did not overtly damage that stability anbd unity.

In a keynote speech, Deng Xiaoping assured writers that, as literature was markedly different from politics, they could write freely without fear of direct interference from political organs.[38] Dramatist Xia Yan's closing speech was even more conciliatory. Xia failed to address any issue that was potentially controversial and merely urged writers to work for the betterment of the nation.[39]

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[37]Howard Goldblatt, Chinese Literature for the 1980s, Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1982, p.xi.

[38]See especially Jean Philippe Béjà, "Chinese Writers as Spokesmen for Society since 1979," in Helmut Martin, ed., Cologne Workshop 1984 on Contemporary Chinese Literature, Köln: Deutsche Welle, 1986, p.196. Deng's speech "Zai zhongguo wenxue yishu gongzuozhe disici daibiao dahuishang de zhuci" (Congratulatory Address at the Fourth Congress of Chinese Literary and Art Workers), Deng Xiaoping wenxuan, pp.179-186.

Chinese critics have effusively described the Fourth Congress as "an extremely important milestone."[40] Nevertheless, the conciliatory message delivered by the leadership was quite ambiguous. Whilst at the same time encouraging writers to cultivate their technical ability and artistic mastery, it also urged them to devote their works to the Four Modernizations (sige xiandaihua) - of agriculture, industry, national defence, and science and technology. No clearcut boundaries were drawn between what was allowed and what was not.

The Fourth Congress may be seen as a "false" climax to the year. The leadership was also apparently dissatisfied with the view it had propagated. Three months later Propaganda Minister Hu Yaobang's speech at the Scriptwriting Symposium pointed out quite explicitly that the symposium had been convened to deal with the lack of "a basic unified outlook" at the Fourth Congress.[41] Hu's speech outlined in detail the problems of exposure and tragedy in socialist literature, clarified that any malaise existing in society was a sequela of the Cultural Revolution period, and that literature should continue to serve the Four Modernizations. It particularly emphasized that all writers had to be, above all, mindful of the "social effects" (shehui xiaoguo) their works would have on their readers.

Without doubt 1979 was a year of expectation in the cultural sphere. It was characterized by an "unparalleled flourishing" of literary works, and

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[39]Xia Yan's closing address appeared in Wenyi bao (Literature and Art Gazette), November-December 1979, pp.27-30.

[40]Zhu Zhai, p.560.

[41]Hu Yaobang, "Zai juben chuangzuo zuotanhuishang de jianghua" (Speech at the Scriptwriting Symposium), Wenyi bao, January 1981, pp.2-20.

also played a significant role in the evolution of post-Mao fiction.[42] Furthermore, 1979 presents an opportunity not readily available at any other stage of contemporary Chinese literary history: the opportunity to compare and contrast the short stories of the nonofficial journals with those of the official media. Finally, the complexity of the literary scene during 1979 arguably renders it a fascinating and worthy period of study.

1.4 THE SHORT STORY AND ITS ROLE IN CONTEMPORARY CHINA

In general terms the short story may be defined as "a fictional prose tale of no specified length... but too short to be published as a volume on its own."[43] It normally concerns itself with a single event and a minimum of characters, rendering it more economical than the continued exploration of social background found in the novel. Victor Hell points out that, in the short story, the term short is more important than the term story. In other words, it should be seen as "une histoire racontée brièvement" rather than merely "une histoire brève."[44]

Several theorists have attempted to establish a precise definition of the short story. Edgar Allan Poe (1809-49), who may be regarded as one of the originators of the short story, defined the genre as "a narrative which can be read at one sitting of from half an hour to two hours" and is limited to

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[42]Béjà, p.190.

[43]Chris Baldick, The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991, p.204.

[44]Victor Hell, "L'art de la brièveté (Genèse et formes du récit court 'short stories' et 'Kurzgeschichten')," Revue de Littérature Comparée, Vol.50 No.4, October-December 1976, p.389.

"a certain unique or single effect" to which every detail is subordinate.[45] Henry James (1843-1916), however, apparently believed the length of the short story to range between six and eight thousand words.[46] Valerie Shaw warns of the problem of attempting an all-inclusive definition of the short story, primarily because "no one summary phrase can encapsulate the diversity of possible story types, lengths and approaches."[47] She does, however, provide an explanation of the realm of possibility offered by the genre:

> A highly self-conscious form, the short story can celebrate spontaneity and the instinctual, or dramatize a moment of revelation which brings a character to full consciousness for the first time in his life; it can use its intactness to say that life's possibilities are hedged and narrow, or to express a view of life as violent and torn by harsh conflict; deliberate and calculated in aim, it can have the apparent casualness of a snapshot.[48]

Chinese definitions of the short story (duanpian xiaoshuo) are no less vague. The entry in the Cihai (Word Sea) on the short story reads:

> A form of fiction, short in length, concise in plot, and concentrated in characterization. It often selects a significant extract of life for description, enabling the reader to "know the whole leopard from one of its spots" [jie yiban er kui quanbao].[49]

The short story first became a distinct genre in China during the May Fourth period. In March 1918 Hu Shi delivered a speech on the short story, which was possibly the first time the term duanpian xiaoshuo was

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[45]M.H. Abrams, A Glossary of Literary Terms, 6th ed., Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1993, p.194. Poe's comments can be found in his 1842 review of Nathaniel Hawthorne's Twice-Told Tales.

[46]Ian Reid, The Short Story, London: Routledge, 1977, p.9.

[47]Valerie Shaw, The Short Story: A Critical Introduction, London: Longman, 1983, p.20.

[48]Shaw, pp.8-9.

[49]Cihai (Word Sea), Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 1979, p.3273.

used.[50] Hu described the short story as a piece of literature written with "the greatest economy of means" describing "the most essential part" of the reality of life. His lecture exerted a far-reaching influence on subsequent theory of the short story in China. In 1921, Mao Dun claimed that the superficial form of the short story was not important, for only its essence counted, and the short story was perfectly capable of describing the whole by means of one part.[51]

The early Chinese short story developed from a number of sources. Primarily, it was developed from Western theory on the short story. Marián Gálik writes that Hu Shi's "exaggerated admiration for the short story as the epitome of the development of fiction" resulted in an uncritical take-over of the genre by Chinese writers.[52] In his lecture, Hu went to great lengths to outline precursors of the short story - or more accurately short fiction - in classical and pre-modern Chinese fiction. There was certainly a rich tradition of shorter fiction in both the classical and vernacular trends of modern writing. The modern Chinese short story may therefore be shown to have assimilated certain principles of composition derived from classical literature.[53]

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[50]Marián Gálik, The Genesis of Modern Chinese Literary Criticism (1917-1930), London: Curzon Press, 1980, p.13. Hu Shi's speech of 15 March 1918 was delivered at Beijing University and was entitled "Lun duanpian xiaoshuo" (On the Short Story).

[51]Gálik, Genesis, p.16; Diana Seglin Granat, Literary Continuity in the New Chinese Short Story: A Study Based on the "Hsiao-shuo Yueh-pao" (Short Story Magazine) 1921-1931, PhD Thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1980; reprinted Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, 1984, p.42.

[52]Gálik, Genesis, p.16. Gálik claims that Hu Shi's theory of the short story was probably gleaned from Clayton Hamilton, Materials and Methods of Fiction (1908), which was later expanded into The Art of Fiction, New York, 1939.

[53]Zbigniew Slupski, ed., A Selective Guide to Chinese Literature 1900-1949: Volume II: The Short Story, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1988, p.19.

The short story developed quite separately from the novel, the form which had been well-established in Chinese literature for generations. In general it can be said that the novel and the short story are separate entities which share the same prose medium but not the same structural or artistic methods. For example, while the novel may reflect social change through the actions of characters over a period of time, the short story is able to reflect this social change through the thoughts of an individual character in a state of conflict. As Mao Dun wrote in 1945, the novel presents a "longitudinal cross-section" (zong poumian) of life whereas the short story presents a "transverse section" (heng duanmian).[54]

The short story was a popular fictional form in Chinese literature both before and after 1949. By the time of the Cultural Revolution the short story had been influenced, like all areas of culture, by techniques developed for the yangbanxi ("revolutionary model operas"). Strangulatory theories of character presentation under the guise of the "positive hero" had been in the ascendancy since the early 1960s. Shortly before it was closed down for the duration of the Cultural Revolution, in November 1965 Renmin wenxue (People's Literature) published a series of short stories written in response to the call for "new socialist heroes". These short stories, intended for emulation, established a trend of common heroes steeped in Maoist Thought.

Chinese critics look back on the short stories from the early years of the Cultural Revolution as being nothing more than "diagrammatic

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[54]Granat, p.42.

representations of quotations from Chairman Mao" (yulu de tujie).[55] By the mid-1970s, presumably following the re-appearance of a limited number of provincial literary journals, more interest was kindled in the creation of the short story. In 1974 the book Duanpian xiaoshuo chuangzuotan (Discussion on the Creation of the Short Story) was published in Shanghai. It not only contained essays advising the would-be author how to create a short story, but also provided model stories to exemplify the points made.

Writing in 1977, Sun Li complains that in the mid-1970s short stories gradually grew in length. He attributes this to short stories being written not by individual authors but by writing groups publishing under pseudonyms. These groups had to decide upon a theme and discuss all the political eventualities before even settling down to write a story. A time of six months for the publication of a short story was therefore good going. The preoccupation with methodology of conception rather than creativity resulted in the lengthening of the short story.[56] Another reason for the lengthening of the short story is that writers were paid by the word. A longer story would therefore result in a greater remuneration should that story be published, especially if that remuneration was to be shared by a number of writers.

In the post-Mao period the short story remained at the forefront of literary creation. In his foreword to the inaugural edition of the journal

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[55]Chen Huangmei, p.290.

[56]Sun Li "Guanyu duanpian xiaoshuo" (On the Short Story), Renmin wenxue, August 1977, p.92.

Xiaoshuo xuankan (Fiction Anthology) in early 1980, Mao Dun proclaimed the dominance of the short story in most effusive language:

> Writers have emancipated their minds, created assiduously and explored with boldness. The garden of the short story is thriving. New writers and outstanding works are constantly emerging. Up and down the Yellow River, to the north and south of the Yangtse, in large cities and rural backwaters, [the short story] is universally praised. In the thirty years since the founding of the People's Republic there has never been such a grand event.[57]

In October 1977 the editorial department of Renmin wenxue held a forum on short story writing. It was decided that the short story should be promoted above other genres as it "swiftly reflects realistic struggle, enhances the morals of the masses and serves proletarian politics."[58] As no real new short stories had been published, the forum decided to rectify the matter. It was no coincidence that Liu Xinwu's short story "Ban zhuren" (The Class Teacher) should have been published in the same issue of Renmin wenxue which carried an article actively promoting the "blooming" of the short story.[59]

There may have been wider social issues leading to the popularity of the short story in the late 1970s. Although written with Soviet literature in mind, Deming Brown's comments on the short story remain apposite to the Chinese case:

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[57]Mao Dun, "Xiaoshuo xuankan fakanci" (Foreword to Fiction Anthology), Xiaoshuo xuankan (Fiction Anthology), January 1980.

[58]"Chongfen fahui duanpian xiaoshuo de zhandou zuoyong" (Fully Play the Militant Role of the Short Story), Renmin ribao (People's Daily), 19 November 1977.

[59]"Cuijin duanpian xiaoshuo de baihua qifang" (Promote the Blooming of the Short Story), Renmin wenxue, November 1977, p.5.

> Short prose forms tend to emerge in times of accelerated social or cultural change, when new attitudes towards human relations, morals, and social behaviour are breaking forth but have not yet become universally recognized. The short story can pose questions, suggest dissatisfaction and doubts, and, in general, present problems without proposing solutions. Because it concentrates on isolated, limited - although often extremely evocative - themes and situations, the short story is ideally suited for use in periods of transition when new social and cultural tendencies are discernible but not yet established...[60]

Writing on the Kurzgeschichte in post-War Germany, Victor Hell points out that short stories tend to appear after the reign of a "megalomaniac dictatorship" and are therefore characteristic of a burgeoning literary movement.[61] There are a number of reasons for the short story to flourish under such conditions. Firstly, there is a pressure of circumstances, i.e. writers need to write down their feelings on the previous regime as quickly as possible. The brevity of the short story allows for completion in a short period of time. Secondly, the short story serves to eradicate the gradiloquent language of the previous regime. Even "literature of the scars", for all its pedestrian conformity, struck out against certain policies of creation upheld during the Cultural Revolution. Finally, there is often a shortage of paper after such a social crisis. This fact is often overlooked by literary historians.[62] There was indeed a chronic short supply of paper for literary journals in China in the late 1970s. This paper shortage was probably the largest single factor keeping literary supply behind reader demand throughout 1979.[63] It also ensured that the short story, which by its very nature used less paper than the novel, increased in popularity.

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[60]Deming Brown, Soviet Russian Literature since Stalin, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1978, p.146.
[61]Hell, p.391.
[62]Hell, p.394.
[63]Link, Mandarin Ducks, p.242.

Although much of the fiction appearing as shouchaoben was in the form of the novel or the novella, it circulated while the "megalomaniac dictatorship" of the Cultural Revolution was dominant. "Literature of the scars", which broke the ground of officially sanctioned literature, was almost without exception in the short story genre.[64] Politically, it upheld the criteria of the short story serving politics. Practically, because it ensured speedier publication, authors chose to contribute short stories rather than novels to magazines and newspaper supplements. Furthermore, literary journals and the cultural pages of newspapers usually set aside space for the works of young authors making their name. This space was necessarily small and therefore favoured the short story rather than longer fiction.[65]

Primarily due to an increase in the number of national and provincial literary journals, the number of short stories published increased rapidly within a few years. Another factor was the desire of would-be writers to make their names. In 1978 the number of short stories recommended to the National Prize Committee was 1,285. The following year this number had increased to over 2,000. By 1982 it had grown in excess of 6,500.[66]

Most of the national and provincial literary journals carried fiction in the short story form rather than any other genre. A small number of novels and novellas were published in these journals, usually serialized over a

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[64]One exception to this is perhaps "Yu wushengchu" (In the Silent Place), a play written by Zong Fuxian, worker at the Shanghai Heat Treatment Plant, which was published in Gongren ribao (Workers' Daily), 3 and 6 November 1978.

[65]Granat, p.v.

[66]Xinshiqi wenxue liunian, p.142.

number of successive issues. A similar situation existed with the nonofficial journals. Jintian (Today) carried 28 short stories but only one novella and no novels over its nine issues. In the realm of fiction 1979 was very definitely the year of the short story.

The currently popular novella (zhongpian xiaoshuo) - a fictional tale intermediate in length and complexity between the short story and the novel - failed to enjoy popular success in comparison to other fictional forms in the early decades of the PRC. Official statistics claim that between 1949 and 1966 a total of only six or seven hundred novellas were published - that translates as an average of 35 to 40 per annum. Between 1966 and 1971 there were no novellas published. A slight increase appeared between 1972 and 1976 with a total of 70 or so novellas published.[67]

The novella, which requires a longer creation and publication cycle than the short story, was unable to react immediately to the change in cultural policy after 1976. Novellas and short stories are not generally created in reaction to cultural policy changes. However, in China in the late 1970s, due to the inextricable links between literature and politics, and also the specific ideological function demanded of the writer, there is an unhealthily close correlation between CCP policy and literary output. By 1979 the appearance of a number of literary journals devoted to longer pieces of fiction had resulted in an alleged "swift and violent tide" (xunmeng chaotou) of novellas. As early as August 1978 Shiyue (October) was launched in Beijing. In January 1979 Shouhuo (Harvest) resumed

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[67]Xinshiqi wenxue liunian, p.210.

publication in Shanghai. In July of the same year these journals were complemented by the launch of Dangdai (Contemporary) in Beijing and Qingming (Qingming) in Hefei. The appearance of these "large scale" (daxing) literary bimonthlies doubtless boosted the popularity of the novella. In 1979 there were some 80 or so novellas published. This number more than doubled to 190 in 1980, and then doubled again to 410 in 1981.[68]

1.5 ESTABLISHING A DATABASE: TYPES AND MODES OF PUBLICATION

In establishing a database of short stories with which to work, it is essential to start with the broadest selection criteria possible. All types and modes of publication must be explored before any definite conclusions can be drawn.

During 1979 there were three basic types of publication. Firstly, there were those newspapers and periodicals - such as Renmin ribao (People's Daily) and Hongqi (Red Flag) - which came under the direct control of the CCP's Central Propaganda Department. These publications carried the orthodox Party line, their content determined by political leaders at the Party Centre. Secondly, there were the so-called "mass journals", of which the official literary journals were a major component. These journals received a budget from the state, but were not necessarily political mouthpieces of the Party Centre. There were, however, Party members present on every editorial board. It was their responsibility to ensure that editorial policy did not deviate too greatly from political policy.[69] Finally,

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[68]Xinshiqi wenxue liunian, p.211.
[69]Helen F. Siu and Zelda Stern, Mao's Harvest: Voices from China's

there were the nonofficial journals of the Democracy Movement. Although the Democracy Movement was launched by the wall poster, by the end of 1978 activists had coagulated into smaller groups each publishing its own journal. During 1979 a number of nonofficial journals - either with overtly political or literary orientations - were published in many of China's larger cities.

How these journals were distributed is a key factor in determining their influence and popularity. Four distinct modes of publication may be identified: (i) official restricted (neibu faxing), i.e. those journals limited to the eyes of Party officials alone; (ii) official nonrestricted, i.e. most of the Party-controlled and mass journals; (iii) nonofficial aboveground, i.e. the nonofficial journals of the Democracy Movement; and (iv) nonofficial underground, i.e. the shouchaoben which had flourished during the early and mid-1970s.[70]

All official periodicals were distributed through the post office. A maximum circulation figure was determined by the State Publications Administration Bureau, not in accordance with reader demand but the degree to which they were deemed politically acceptable being the main or only factor. By April 1980 there was a total of 1,500 or so official periodicals available through the post office, of which 110 were literary in orientation.[71] However, a restrictive allocation and purchasing policy

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New Generation, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983, p.xlviii.

[70]Perry Link, "Fiction and the Reading Public in Guangzhou and Other Chinese Cities 1979-1980," in Jeffrey C. Kinkley, ed., After Mao: Chinese Literature and Society 1978-1981, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985, p.244.

[71]Link, "Fiction," p.240.

served to hinder the smooth circulation of most literary journals throughout 1979.

The Chinese post office administered a two-tier system of allocation. Government officials and work units enjoyed the rights to priority subscription. Those journals remaining were offered for retail at outlets in the post office or in local bookshops. As many as 50% of the local literary journals were reserved for retail sales.[72] Many of the more popular local journals were sold out within hours of appearing in the shops. As Perry Link writes, word spread surprisingly quickly when one of these popular journals came into stock, and long queues of purchasers formed. Moreover, "when the prize was especially desirable, a jostling, clamorous crowd would press itself from all sides upon one or two harried clerks."[73]

In late 1979 as many as 50 literary journals were in the freest distribution category. This meant that subscriptions were available to people in all occupations, and retail sales were permitted in designated post offices. Determined efforts were made to adjust the number of journals set aside for retail sales, thereby ensuring that all readers had the opportunity to secure their own copy. Apparently 40% of copies of Renmin wenxue were to be set aside for this purpose.[74]

Other methods of securing journals also became popular. It was possible to borrow copies of recent journals from colleagues and friends. It was also

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[72]Link, "Fiction," p.242. Link's figure refers to Guangdong Province in particular, but it may be presumed to be generally applicable.
[73]Link, Mandarin Ducks, p.241.
[74]Link, Mandarin Ducks, p.240.

possible to borrow journals from the small library in most work units. Popular items were, however, almost always impossible to locate. In the autumn of 1979 the Beijing authorities conducted an experiment in hiring out literary journals. The deposit amounted to much more than the cover price of the journal, but a daily charge of about ¥0.04 was well within the reach of most readers. This experiment netted a spectacular loss of some 25% in its initial months.[75]

Nonofficial journals were denied access to publishers and subscribers through official channels. As all printing equipment and the distribution of paper was controlled by the authorities, the amateur publishers were unable to put out regular editions of their journals. Many of these journals were mimeographed copies made from poorly crafted stencils. The cover price of the nonofficial journals was often higher than that of their official counterparts. Although sold quite openly - contact names and addresses regularly appeared in the journals - their purchase was still perceived as something of a shady business.[76]

The degree of literary openness in the official realm was not always uniform. The main cultural question in the aftermath of the Third Plenum was how much leeway would open up in the political control of literature. This question was answered with a certain degree of ambiguity. There were regional divergences in interpretation of the new cultural policy.[77] Those

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[75]Link, Mandarin Ducks, p.241. It is unclear whether a similar scheme was in operation elsewhere in China during 1979, but the hiring out of books and periodicals became a common nationwide phenomenon during the 1980s.

[76]Link, Mandarin Ducks, p.242.

[77]Jenner, p.278.

divergences resulted in an imbalance between central and provincial literary policy, and a contrast in atmosphere at different times of the year in different regions.

Certain areas of the country, most notably Hebei Province, attempted to stanch the flow of openness in literary journals under their direct jurisdiction. They gauged any slight nuance in cultural policy promulgated from the capital as indicative of a desired retreat from the realms of openness. Those areas were only partially successful in their stifling of new ideas. They had little control over the readers in their area not reading journals published in the more "liberated" areas. They were also unable to prevent writers from sending their works to editors in more enlightened areas or to editors of nonofficial journals.[78]

The literary policy promoted by some areas of the country, most notably Shanghai and Guangzhou, was apparently more "liberal". The reputation of these areas in the field of literature resulted from an emancipated editorial policy rather than any superiority in the quality of work published. Anhui Province, another area with open-minded political leaders, had apparently abandoned orthodox literary policy as early as 1977 as a direct result of the province's economic sufferings during the 1960s and 1970s.[79]

In order to break into literary "forbidden zones", it was necessary for writers, especially those not yet established, to seek an alliance with

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[78]Jenner, p.279.

[79]Jenner, p.279. Anhui's two literary journals, the monthly Anhui wenxue (Anhui Literature) and the bimonthly Qingming (Qingming), were two of the most outspoken official publications in China in 1979 and 1980.

forward-thinking editors and/or officials. With the support of the local authorities, writers were able to effect breakthroughs with the minimum of risk to themselves. This so-called "backstage support" (houtai) ensured that potentially controversial works met with approval rather than censure, particularly at the local level.

Another important factor in expanding the boundaries of literary acceptability during 1979 was the rehabilitation and return to publishing of those middle-aged writers who had fallen foul of the regime in the 1950s and 1960s. Within a few years these writers would be recognized as the "backbone" of China's contemporary literary scene.[80] The new political leadership around Deng Xiaoping required the support of both scientific and literary intellectuals in order to put forward the image of a new cultural freedom. It also anticipated that the recently exonerated writers would not totally condemn the socialist system in their writings. Loyal to the Party line, any autonomy or cultural freedoms these writers sought were conducted without overt provocation and from within the system. Moreover, the editorial boards of many of the new literary periodicals appearing in 1979 were gradually staffed by some of these middle-aged writers. In these positions of semi-authority the writers were able to sanction literary advances without endangering the delicate balance of the political status quo.

It was in the political interest of the rehabilitated writers to be seen as contented adherents of the new regime, for they were unwilling to damage

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[80]Feng Mu and Liu Xicheng, "Recent Trends in Chinese Writing," China Reconstructs, January 1982, pp.16-18.

their newly regained prestige. Their veiling of literary observations in pro forma denunciations of the Gang of Four and conformity to current Party policy merely alienated them from the younger writers whom the leadership hoped they would influence.[81] Those writers publishing in nonofficial journals became overtly dissatisfied with what they perceived as establishmentarianism on the part of the middle-aged writers. They also felt that the older writers were losing their critical intelligence.[82] Despite their obvious use to the leadership, the middle-aged writers were not merely objects of manipulation and were not beholden to the ideas of their sponsors in their fiction.[83] In short, despite an overt loyalty to the CCP, these writers were not hesitant to point out its shortcomings in their fiction.

Nonofficial journals were not bound by the strictures of official cultural or editorial policy. They were in a position to publish freely stories and poems going far beyond the limits set down by official policy. This resulted in a more open, if unendorsed, atmosphere for culture which would possibly influence any expansion of limits in the official sphere.

It may be argued that the greater the distance between literary creation and extraneous political pressure, the better the chance for high quality

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[81]Perry Link, Roses and Thorns: The Second Blooming of the Hundred Flowers in Chinese Fiction 1979-1980, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984, p.21.

[82]Leo Ou-fan Lee, "The Politics of Technique: Perspectives of Literary Dissidence in Contemporary Chinese Fiction," in Jeffrey C. Kinkley, ed., After Mao: Chinese Literature and Society 1978-1981, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985, p.182.

[83]Merle Goldman, Chinese Intellectuals Advise and Dissent, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981, p.2.

creation.[84] In the Chinese case, however, literary works appearing in official publications have been viewed as more important than those appearing in nonofficial publications. The reasons for this are quite elementary. Firstly, the prestige of publishing in an official journal greatly outweighed that of publishing in a nonofficial journal. The greater circulation enjoyed by the official journals increased the potential renown a would-be writer could achieve. Secondly, there was a greater degree of safety having one's works published officially, and thereby supported by local officialdom. Finally, any dissenting comments the writer wished to portray via his/her fiction would arguably exert a greater influence on society if published officially.

There were, nevertheless, still a number of younger writers who preferred the freedoms offered by the nonofficial press.[85] Constitutionally the nonofficial press was not illegal. Encouragement from part of the top leadership led the editors of and contributors to those journals into believing that what they were doing was not unacceptable. Chinese activists were opposed to being labelled "dissidents" and refused to allow their journals to be known as "dissident" publications. The journals were more euphemistically termed "people-run" publications (minban kanwu) or "nonofficial" journals. The main danger of illegality for the journals was that the permissive policy towards them might change in the future.

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[84]Perry Link, Stubborn Weeds: Popular and Controversial Literature after the Cultural Revolution, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983, p.6.

[85]After 1976 some fiction continued to be circulated underground, thereby providing a third vehicle for publication alongside official and nonofficial journals.

Moreover, these journals were often seen by their youthful contributors as stepping stones to the regular official press.[86]

Despite H. Gordon Skilling devoting a section of his study on samizdat to Chinese nonofficial literature in the post-Mao period,[87] this phenomenon does not (in many cases) parallel precisely samizdat as it is understood in the Soviet Union or Eastern Europe. For a short while at least, Chinese activists enjoyed civil relations with the government and saw themselves as acting in its support rather than in its opposition.[88] Whereas samizdat literature in other countries was generally pursued by established writers forced underground, nonofficial literature in China was pursued by young, would-be writers striving to be accepted above ground.

A database of some 148 short stories from three distinct types of publication has been established for this study. Two journals have been chosen from the official press. Renmin wenxue (People's Literature) is centrally controlled from Beijing and therefore, presumably, most indicative of central cultural policy. It is distributed on a nationwide basis. Zuopin (Literary Works) is published in Guangzhou, one of the areas enjoying a relatively liberal cultural policy during 1979. It was one of the most influential provincial literary journals of the year. One journal has been chosen from the nonofficial press. Jintian (Today) was perhaps the most famous - and certainly the longest lived - of the nonofficial literary

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[86]Link, Roses and Thorns, p.39.
[87]H. Gordon Skilling, Samizdat and an Independent Society in Central and Eastern Europe, Basingstoke: MacMillan Press, 1989, p.15.
[88]Andrew Nathan, Chinese Democracy, New York: Knopf, 1985, p.24.

journals of the Democracy Movement. It was distributed mainly among young, intellectual readers living in the capital.

1.5.1 Renmin wenxue: A Central Voice.

Renmin wenxue is the official publication of the Chinese Writers' Union (zuoxie). The Writers' Union is the principal professional body in Chinese literary life. It is the major literary subdivision of the Chinese Federation of Literary and Art Circles (wenlian), and is responsible to and supervised by the CCP Central Committee. Although the Writers' Union was established to provide a forum for the interchange of literary ideas, it also presents itself as the direct channel through which the CCP can transmit its mandates on contemporary literature.[89]

Renmin wenxue was inaugurated on 25 October 1949 and appeared monthly until May 1966 when it was closed down at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. It was re-established in January 1976 when the editions were once again numbered starting with issue one. Renmin wenxue was at the forefront of "literature of the scars" publishing Liu Xinwu's seminal story "The Class Teacher" in November 1977.[90] In 1979 Renmin wenxue published a total of 85 short stories over its twelve monthly issues. The only other piece of fiction published by the journal during 1979 was a serialized novel which had been written before the Cultural Revolution.[91]

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[89]Howard L. Boorman, "The Literary World of Mao Tse-tung," Cyril Birch, ed., Chinese Communist Literature, New York: Praeger, 1963, p.28.

[90]The following summer, however, Renmin wenxue was not willing to publish Lu Xinhua's short story "Shanghen" (Scar). Lu's manuscript was returned to him as the story had proven too depressing and therefore morally unsuitable for mass readership consumption.

It has been argued that centrally controlled literary journals such as Renmin wenxue were possibly "livelier than most" during 1979.[92] In comparison with some of the less tolerant provincial journals this was no doubt true. Renmin wenxue has a reputation of being somewhat conservative in its outlook, especially as it toes the political line advocated by the CCP contingent on its editorial board. The stories it carried were not subject to a great deal of controversy. Neither did it achieve the degree of popularity of some of the provincial journals. If Renmin wenxue was more "liberated" during 1979, this was but a reflection of official cultural policy.

1.5.2 Zuopin: A Provincial Voice.

Zuopin is the official publication of the Guangdong provincial branch of the Chinese Writers' Union. It was inaugurated in April 1955 but closed down eleven years later at the start of the Cultural Revolution. The journal was re-established in 1972 under the changed name of Guangdong wenyi (Guangdong Literature and Art). Its name reverted to Zuopin in June 1978. The journal had a cover price of ¥0.30 during 1979.

Two particular short stories published in Zuopin in February and March 1979 contributed to the popularity of the journal throughout China.[93] This popularity was reflected in the increasing ceiling figure imposed on the

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[91]Lao She, "Zheng hongqi xia" (Under the Pure Red Flag), Renmin wenxue, April 1979, pp.101-20; May 1979, pp.95-118.

[92]Link, Stubborn Weeds, p.18.

[93]Chen Guokai, "Wo yinggai zenme ban" (What Should I Do?), Zuopin, February 1979, pp.37-50; Kong Jiesheng, "Zai xiaohe neibian" (On the Other Side of the Stream), Zuopin, March 1979, pp.31-42.

print run of the journal by the State Publication Administration Bureau. In mid-1978 the figure was 70,000, but six months later it had increased to 210,000, and by early 1980 it had increased again to 500,000. This was without doubt the largest ceiling figure in China for a provincial-level literary journal. It outranked its nearest rival by about a factor of ten.[94]

The large ceiling figure enjoyed by Zuopin partly resulted from an abundance of paper in Guangdong province. Some of this paper was even traded from other provinces in return for copies of Zuopin. It has been claimed that Hunan Province traded 15 tons of its annual paper allowance for 1979 to Guangdong in exchange for an extra 12,500 copies per month of the journal.[95]

In July 1979 Wenyi bao (Literature and Art Gazette) - the official publication of the Chinese Federation of Literary and Art Circles - published an anonymous letter from a reader in Sichuan province singing the praises of Zuopin. The letter attested to the popularity of the journal nationally:

> Even though Zuopin, the literary monthly from Guangdong province, was not recommended by anyone in our factory nor [its subscription] organized by any of the bosses, from about January of this year [1979] it was suddenly being passed around and read by all the workers. Many of us went to the reading room to "queue up" and "register" automatically for it according to the name list. Others wanted to subscribe to it, but all were disappointed by the word "limited" which appeared in the periodicals catalogue. Those who were able to get hold of a copy studiously read it at one go.[96]

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[94]Link, "Fiction," p.241. Link's figures are based on interviews he conducted at the Zuopin editorial offices in March 1980.

[95]Link, Mandarin Ducks, p.242.

[96]Quoted in Liu Dawen, p.169.

During 1979 Zuopin carried a total of 51 short stories. Other works of fiction in the journal consisted of one novel, one piece of short fiction by a Taiwanese author and three translations of Western fiction.[97]

1.5.3 Jintian: A Nonofficial Voice.

Jintian has been described as "undoubtedly the most professionally published" of all the nonofficial publications.[98] It was clearly the most important and influential nonofficial literary journal. After more than two months of secret planning the journal first appeared on 23 December 1978 with the provisional English title of The Moment. In this first issue the editorial board defined its credo for literary creation. Just as the May Fourth Movement had marked the beginning of a new cultural era, the editorial board of Jintian perceived an awakening from the cultural despotism of the Cultural Revolution in the same terms. As a whole, older, established writers were criticized for having fallen behind the times. Reflecting the spirit of the new era was therefore a task that only younger writers were able to undertake. The declaration of the editorial board concluded:

> Today, when man raises his eyes again, he will no longer stop vertically at the cultural legacy of several thousand years, but will begin to look at the horizon. Only by so doing will we be able to truly understand our own value and avoid the joke of being self-important or the sorrow of giving ourselves up as hopeless. Our today is rooted in the fertile soil of the ancient past with the concept

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[97]The novel was Wu Youheng, Binhaizhuan (Story of the Coast) which appeared in March 1979, pp.50-61 and April 1979, pp.40-50. The Taiwanese work was Bai Xianyong, "Siji fu" (Poem of Nostalgia), September 1979, pp.39-42. The translations included works by, among others, Somerset Maugham.

[98]David S.G. Goodman, Beijing Street Voices: The Poetry and Politics of China's Democracy Movement, London: Boyars, p.89.

> of being in it to grow and die. What is past is already past, the future is still far away. To our generation only today is today![99]

In their questioning of the nation's traditional culture and mentality, the contributors to Jintian could not but imply scepticism towards the socialist system which had so distorted them. They concurred that although China's traditional culture was something of which the nation could feel proud, contemporary literature needed to absorb elements of foreign culture to rejuvenate it - as had been the case with the May Fourth writers. In order to depict accurately the nature of the new literary era, the flagging cultural traditions would have to be re-evaluated through a transfusion of foreign literary blood. Jintian therefore regularly published translations of contemporary Western literature as food-for-thought for its readers.[100]

More importantly, the young writers attempted to prove that the subordination of literature to politics would cause literary creativity to stagnate. The short stories appearing in Jintian were generally devoid of overt political statement. Any criticism of the status quo was oblique, the writers favouring personal expression above political rhetoric. The presented assessment of recent history likewise diverged from the Party-propagated norm. It has been argued that merely declining to agree with the ruling ideology is in itself "a political act."[101] Jintian's proclivity

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[99]This passage comes from the editorial board's first editorial entitled "Zhi duzhe" (To Our Readers), Jintian, No.1, December 1978. It is quoted from JPRS, No.74909, 11 January 1980, pp.20-21.

[100]Jintian carried translations of and introductions to: Aleixandre (1:49-51), Graham Greene (1:56-61), Heinrich Böll (1:61-67), Russian symbolism (2:75-84), Gruppe 47 (2:84) and Kurt Vonnegut (9:50-57).

[101]Bonnie S. McDougall, "Zhao Zhenkai's Fiction: A Study in Cultural Alienation," Modern Chinese Literature, Vol.1 No.1, September 1984, p.113.

towards "apoliticality" in fact provided the journal with a strong political stand. The argument against political intervention in literature was voiced eloquently:

> ... [J]ust as the same cloud would evoke different responses in the minds of a meteorologist and a poet, images of society should be different in the eyes of a writer and a politician. There was always a contradiction between the pragmatic function of literature as an expression of the emotions and feelings of an individual. Politics in an authoritarian system is centralized, while the emotions of the people that are sought out and portrayed in literature are myriad. Writers should be entitled to express their own feelings and thoughts in their own ways.[102]

Between December 1978 and July 1980 Jintian published a total of nine issues at irregular intervals. The journal was forcibly closed down on 25 September 1980 on the pretext that it had never officially registered with the appropriate authorities. During 1979 five issues were published - in February, April, June, September and December - each of which had a print run of only 1,000 copies. Jintian carried 12 short stories that year, together with one serialized novella, and a translation of a short story by Yevtuschenko.[103]

1.6 CONCLUSIONS

The year 1979 played a seminal role in the evolution of contemporary Chinese fiction. The main player on the literary stage throughout the year

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[102]Pan Yuan and Pan Jie, "The Non-Official Magazine TODAY and the Younger Generation's Ideals for a New Literature," in Jeffrey C. Kinkley, ed., After Mao: Chinese Literature and Society 1978-1981, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985, p.196.

[103]Zhao Zhenkai, "Bodong" (Waves), 4:31-71; 5:1-13, 29-48; 6:21-41, 43-56. Jintian's first issue of 1980 (No.7, February) was devoted to the short story and carried eight original works.

was, without doubt, the short story. Its style and length rendered it most suited to a period in which the new literary policy was being established. Examination of the short story is therefore perhaps most appropriate in determining the developments marking post-Mao Chinese fiction. A database of some 148 short stories from literary journals of varying types and modes of publication has been established to provide a rounded picture. The information in the database may appear unbalanced, in that the number of short stories from official journals outweighs those from nonofficial journals in an approximate ratio of 11:1. While this may prejudice any results obtained from the database in favour of the official journals, their outnumbering of the nonofficial journals reflects the reality of the situation. The greater number and availability of the official literary journals to the Chinese readership in 1979 is reflected in this imbalance. Any results based on the database will therefore need to be judiciously mindful of this imbalance. Finally, a database restricted to three journals, despite their diversity, will not be able to cover all the aspects of Chinese fiction in 1979. From time to time this study will therefore refer to short stories (and other fictional forms) not included in the database in order to illustrate points relevant to the development of Chinese fiction in the late 1970s.

Chapter Two:
Concepts of Criticism:
Towards a Method of Interpretation

2.1 INTERPRETING LITERATURE

The previous chapter clarified what information was to be interpreted in this study. This chapter turns its attention more specifically towards how that information is to be interpreted.

The methodology of literary criticism contains no hard and fast rules. The terminology and approaches adopted by literary critics are undergoing a continual process of invention and reinvention. The same text can be interpreted from a number of approaches and emphases which co-exist under the broad umbrella of literary criticism. As Wayne C. Booth aptly points out, the literary process "is an art, not a science, but this does not mean that we are necessarily doomed to fail when we attempt to formulate principles about it."[1]

Any number of "principles" may be used to interpret the short stories under review in this study. There may exist fundamental differences in the "principles" formulated by Western literary critics and those formulated by their Chinese counterparts. An examination of the approaches to contemporary Chinese fiction by contemporary Western and Chinese critics,

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[1]Wayne C. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961, p.164.

whether from literary or broader sociopolitical standpoints, will assist in the establishment of a method of interpretation most suited to this study.

This examination will be threefold. Firstly, Chinese concepts of criticism will be discussed. The discussion will confine itself to Chinese approaches to and theories of literary practice which developed under the banner of Marxist literary theory in the Maoist era, but which continued to be influential until at least the early 1980s. Emphasis will be placed on the ways in which Chinese critics have viewed the fiction of 1979. Secondly, the approaches adopted by Western critics of post-Mao Chinese fiction will be weighed up and compared with the Chinese approach. And thirdly, as these two options are far from being the only viable ones, critical approaches to post-Mao fiction not adopted by Chinese or Western critics in the late 1970s and early 1980s should also be considered. The final method(s) of interpretation selected may either assimilate or reject any of the approaches adopted in existing criticisms of late 1970s Chinese literature.

2.2 CHINESE LITERARY CONCEPTS: REALISM AND MARXISM

Primarily under the direction of the Maoist literary line, the mode of "realism" was propagated as playing the leading role on the 20th century Chinese literary stage. The important position of "realism" in Chinese fiction from the 1920s to the 1980s is undeniable. It has even been argued that both Chinese and Western scholars have regarded "realism" as "the crowning achievement" of modern and contemporary Chinese literature.[2]

The term "realism", as it is defined in the West, is applied in two different ways. It is associated with a movement in 19th century fiction, primarily the novel, in which the problems of ordinary people in unremarkable circumstances are rendered with close attention to the details of physical setting and to the complexities of social life.[3] More importantly, however, it points to a wider tendency in fiction to represent human life and experience in a manner which faithfully "reflects" or "reproduces" real life.[4]

"Realism" can be a somewhat misleading term. It carries the connotation of a methodology rooted in verisimilitude, that is, a "detailed accuracy of description", whilst at the same time more generally rejecting "idealization, escapism, and other extravagant qualities of romance" in favour of analysing the actual problems of life.[5] "Realist" fiction is therefore constructed so as to give the effect that it is representative of the social world familiar to the reader. The "realist" writer is obliged to render his or her material in such a way as to make it seem to the reader "the very stuff of ordinary experience."[6] "Realism" may be interpreted not as a mirror held up to life, but as a fictive construct taking on the appearance of a "faithful reproduction" of reality - an artificially created "slice of life".

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[2]Marston Anderson, The Limits of Realism: Chinese Fiction in the Revolutionary Period, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990, p.3.

[3]Baldick, p.184. Representative works of the 19th century realist novel include Honoré de Balzac, Illusions perdues (1837-43); Gustave Flaubert, Madame Bovary (1857); and George Eliot, Middlemarch (1871-2). The realist novel may be seen as rooted in the 18th century fiction of Daniel Defoe and Henry Fielding.

[4]Abrams, p.174.

[5]Baldick, p.184.

[6]Abrams, p.174.

Russian Formalists, and following them structuralist critics, have argued that "realism" is constructed from a system of literary conventions producing a "lifelike illusion" of some "real world" existing outside the text.[7] Due to its reliance on literary conventions - e.g. processes of selection, exclusion, description and manners of addressing the reader - "realism" is perhaps best viewed as an artificial form rather than the transparent reflection of life its adherents suggest.

Marston Anderson points out another apparent problem with the term "realism":

> If one takes both of its elements at face value, the term realist fiction verges on being an oxymoron: fiction connotes the world of the imagination, which authors evoke through the active exercise of their powers of invention, whereas realism, by asserting an optimal equivalency of the text and the real world, implies the effacement of the author as creator.[8]

The 1979 Cihai (Word Sea) definition of "realism" (xianshi zhuyi) subscribes to the traditional Western view that it advocates the objective observation of real life, meticulously describing the true picture of what actually happens in life.[9] Paraphrasing comments made by Engels in the 1880s on "realism" in fiction, the definition continues by stating that apart from truthfulness of plot, "realism" also demands the "reproduction of typical characters in typical circumstances." The reference to Engels accords "realism", or at least the Chinese definition of it, the ideological "correctness" of the Marxist literary line. The Cihai definition also asserts

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[7]Abrams, p.174. Abrams refers to Roland Barthes, "The Reality Effect" in Tzvetan Todorov, ed., French Literary Theory Today (1982) as the article where this viewpoint is most succinctly articulated.

[8]Anderson, p.8.

[9]Cihai (1979), p.2671.

that examples of "realism" may be found in traditional Chinese literature: the odes of the Shijing, the poetry of Du Fu, and Cao Xueqin's novel Honglou meng (Dream of the Red Chamber).

René Wellek writes of the "didacticism" and "reformism" inherent in the concept of "realism". Despite its claim to objectivity, "realism" hardly ever achieves a high degree of objectivity in practice, for the line between "description and prescription" is often blurred.[10] It was not only the Chinese writers of the modern and contemporary period who, through "realism", believed themselves to have a social responsibility to comment on and influence society. The classical idiom of orthodox, pre-modern literature also served a didactic and utilitarian purpose, namely the propagation of the Confucian ideology of the rulers.[11] This didactic element in traditional literature was therefore continued and developed following the adoption of "realism" as a popular mode of literary creation, especially when it was used to encourage readers' allegiance to the cause of socialism in the Maoist era.

Jaroslav Průšek points out that "truthfulness" (shi), or the accurate rendering of facts, was "always most highly valued" in traditional Chinese narrative. These facts, however prosaically recorded, were not constructed to form the "higher artistic unity" generally associated with "realism".[12]

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[10]René Wellek, Concepts of Criticism (1963), quoted in Michael S. Duke, ed., Contemporary Chinese Literature: An Anthology of Post-Mao Fiction and Poetry, Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1985, p.3.

[11]Wilt Lukas Idema, Chinese Vernacular Fiction: The Formative Period, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1974, p.xvii.

[12]Jaroslav Průšek, "Reality and Art in Chinese Literature," in Leo Ou-fan Lee, ed., The Lyrical and the Epic: Studies of Modern Chinese Literature, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980, p.92.

Reference to "realist literature" in China first became apparent in an essay by the late Qing dynasty reformist Liang Qichao in 1902.[13] "Realism" was rendered by the term xieshi zhuyi (literally: "writing the truth"-ism), which in itself was a Japanese translation of the term used by Western critics. Whereas xieshi zhuyi has been dismissed by critics in the PRC as being "inaccurate" (bu jingque) and replaced by xianshi zhuyi, it is a term which literary critics in Taiwan and Hong Kong have continued to use.

Officially sanctioned surveys of Chinese literary history published since 1949 have singled out the development of "realism" in the post-May Fourth period as the main trend in modern Chinese literature. Although literature of the 1920s and 1930s was marked by a push towards a "conquest of the widest possible area of reality", "realism" was not the only literary form in evidence.[14] More importantly, modern Chinese literary "realism" was not the unified movement so often depicted. It was, at best, a "narrative domain", presumably one that was not all-encompassing.[15] While there can be no doubt that Lu Xun was the "originator" of a modern Chinese realist discourse and that his greatest contribution lay in the fact that he "managed to assimilate 19th century European realism to Chinese narrative formats," the development of "realism" in the 1920s is not so clear-cut.[16]

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[13]Liang Qichao, "Xiaoshuo yu qunzhongzhi zhi guanxi" (On the Relationship between Fiction and the Government of the Masses), quoted in Anderson, p.28.

[14]Průšek, "Reality," p.86.

[15]David Der-wei Wang, Fictional Realism in Twentieth-Century China: Mao Dun, Lao She, Shen Congwen, New York: Columbia University Press, 1992, p.291.

[16]David Wang, p.3. I am heavily indebted to David Wang for the ideas in this and the following paragraph.

Mao Dun was probably the critic and author "most responsible for" the propagation of Western-style "realism" in China.[17] Mao Dun's novels of the late 1920s and early 1930s married the structural elements of the 19th century realist novel with the sociopolitical demands of a writer at the spearhead of a literary revolution.[18] Mao Dun was also instrumental in founding the Association for Literary Studies (Wenxue yanjiuhui), which advocated "realism". Promoting Mao Dun as the primary practitioner of "realism" in the post-May Fourth period points to a deeper agenda on the part of the Communist literary authorities. As a Marxist and a CCP member, Mao Dun's fiction was imbued with a political propaganda, a kind of "realism" of commitment as it were. This was precisely the type of "realism" the authorities wanted to propagate. Other modern "realist" writers such as Lao She, who subverted the real with "melodramatic tears and hysterical laughter,"[19] or even Shen Congwen, whose vision of the real was tempered by lyricism, did not appear as committed to the Marxist cause.

The Chinese interpretation of the Marxist literary line determines that "realism" is the preferred - and therefore the "correct" - mode of literary creation. This same interpretation demands that the representation of reality portrayed in literature cannot be regarded as "ideologically neutral" or "value free".[20] To address this problem, "realism" in the Chinese

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[17]Anderson, p.33.

[18]David Wang, p.11. Průsek claims that Mao Dun's novel Ziye (Midnight, 1933) is "probably the most exact portrayal of the social situation at the time in question, and one that, in this respect, no other writer could measure up to" ("Reality," p.93).

[19]David Wang, p.23.

[20]Yi-tsi Mei Feuerwerker, "The Dialectics of Struggle: Ideology and Realism in Mao Dun's 'Algae'," in Theodore Huters, ed., Reading the

context is generally modified by a preceding adjective depending on its location in the chronological order of the revolution.

The "realism" practised by many of the writers of the 1920s and 1930s was designated, in retrospect, as "critical realism" (pipan xianshi zhuyi). This "realism" was in itself an emulation of the "realism", and often the naturalistic tendencies, of 19th century European novels. Although such works, according to the Marxist world view, may be seen as created by "bourgeois intellectuals", leading Marxist ideologues such as Engels and Lenin both recommended the reading of European realism.[21] "Critical realism" was acceptable as it both exposed and criticized the evils of "feudalist" and "capitalist" societies, and on occasion expressed sympathy for the tragic plight of the working classes.

Marxist literary thought may be interpreted as a generalization appearing as a mere extension of Marxist socio-economic theory. During the 19th century Marx and Engels developed explanations of the historical evolution of the capitalist mode of production, but had little time to elaborate a cultural theory to explain how literature (or art) were determined by the socio-economic forces which make up the base of a particular historical system.[22] Neither Marx nor Engels ever produced a study solely devoted to

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Modern Chinese Short Story, Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1990, p.53.

[21]Apparently Engels had a preference for 19th century European realists like Dickens and Balzac, whereas Lenin's views on literature are known only through his fragmentary writings in praise of Tolstoy. Paul Gene Pickowicz, Ch'ü Ch'iu-pai and the Origins of Marxist Literary Criticism in China, PhD Thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1973; reprinted Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1975, p.37.

[22]Ian Ousby, ed., The Cambridge Guide to Literature in English, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p.608.

the subject of literature. This is a result of the Marxist view that literature cannot be dealt with as an isolated phenomenon.[23] As they were not literary critics, and anything that they wrote on literature seemed to be a reflection of their personal tastes rather than a systematic analysis of the relationship between art and society, all that Marx and Engels achieved was to reveal the location of literature in the Marxist scheme of things.[24] Douwe Fokkema has outlined five basic tenets of the Marxist literary line: (1) literature is part of the superstructure dominated by the economic base; (2) the relationship between literature and the economic base is dialectical; (3) literature should aim at verisimilitude (i.e. realism); (4) literary texts should advance societal development, usually through a careful selection of truthful representation; and (5) periods of great artistic momentum do not necessarily reflect a high development of the material base.[25]

Mao Zedong's "Talks at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art" of May 1942 consolidated his interpretation of the Marxist literary line and laid the foundation of the CCP's policy towards literature. The central issue of the "Talks" was the ability of "realism" to show progressive social evolution,[26] and the suitability of "realism", when defined by the concerns of Marxism, to represent socialist society. What Mao said amounted to an insistence of

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[23]Douwe Fokkema, "Strength and Weakness of the Marxist Theory of Literature with Reference to Marxist Criticism in the People's Republic of China," in John J. Deeney, ed., Chinese-Western Comparative Literature Theory and Strategy, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1980, pp.113-28.

[24]Ousby, p.608.

[25]Fokkema, p.117.

[26]Wendy Larson, "Realism, Modernism and the Anti-'Spiritual Pollution' Campaign in China," Modern China, 15.1 (1989), p.41.

CCP control over literature and art - a restrictive control which was to remain influential even after his death. Three basic rules governing the control of literature were outlined. Firstly, writers should serve the interests of the people. They should write for and be guided by the people, developing a popular style intelligible to all common people. Secondly, authors and artists were to familiarize themselves with Marxism in order to subordinate literature and art to political requirements. Basic literary values had to remain in accordance with the political values of the CCP. Just as writers were to create according to political aims, so critics should always analyse literary works according to political criteria rather than appraise any literary techniques in the works. Political acceptability was always to enjoy precedence over artistic technique so that writers became "mechanical reproducers" of CCP policy.[27] Thirdly, writers were not to expose shortcomings among the people or to dwell on the dark side of society.[28]

The "Yan'an Talks" were formulated in a specific historical circumstance when China was at war with Japan. In subordinating literature to political expedience, Mao ensured that writers united behind the CCP in the struggle against the Japanese (and also the Nationalists). Mao viewed literary works as political weapons which could serve the revolution alongside other written propaganda. In directing writers to paint in their

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[27]Lee, "Politics of Technique," p.159.

[28]For more on Mao's "Yan'an Talks" see: Bonnie S. McDougall, Mao Zedong's 'Talks at the Yan'an Conference on Literature and Art': A Translation of the 1943 Text with Commentary, Michigan Papers in Chinese Studies, No. 39, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1980; Merle Goldman, Literary Dissent in Communist China, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967, pp.20-36.

works a picture of society not as it was but as the CCP declared it to be, Mao was able to reinforce the Party propaganda machine. It is also important to stress that the "Yan'an Talks" were delivered as part of a larger Rectification Campaign (fengzheng yundong) aimed at developing a corps of disciplined cadres and intellectuals. By narrowing the boundaries of literary policy, Mao hoped that writers would purge themselves of any bourgeois tendencies and declare themselves loyal to the revolution. As Bonnie McDougall has suggested, Mao's whole purpose in launching the Rectification Campaign was "to alter people's behaviour by influencing their moral and political acts."[29]

Through the dictates of the "Yan'an Talks", Mao's interpretation of the Marxist literary line became the only doctrine of official artistic expression in China for four decades. That the "Yan'an Talks" should remain the definitive statement on literary questions for so many years is unsurprising when one considers the inextricable ties between literature and political ideology in the PRC. Nonetheless, the effect of the "Yan'an Talks" on the artistic quality of literature was devastating. It would therefore be fair to say that after 1949, when the policies of Yan'an could be applied to the whole nation, the literary output of Chinese writers was controlled by an increasingly "dogmatic and mechanical" application of a "narrowly determinist" ideology which stifled its development.[30]

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[29]McDougall, Mao Zedong's 'Talks', p.32.

[30]Michael S. Duke, Blooming and Contending: Chinese Literature in the Post-Mao Era, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985, pp.1-2.

Although the PRC literary authorities have eulogized the "Yan'an Talks" as "the most important and brilliant Chinese Marxist statement on literature and art",[31] the talks are indicative of an ideological system which went much deeper than the cultural sphere. The "Yan'an Talks" attest to Mao's development of the Marxist cultural line from a system of beliefs into a functioning ideology. Literature and art were an integral part of this ideological system which was based on Mao's interpretation of Marxist socio-economic theory. With literature brought into line behind political concerns, Mao was better able to exercise ideological control over the Chinese people through a medium which could reach all areas of society.

Chinese literary criticism from the late 1940s until at least the early 1980s is founded very much in accordance with the criteria of the "Yan'an Talks". Mao's particular interpretation of the Marxist literary line provided the ideological framework within which all literary workers, including critics, were to operate. It was the responsibility of the critic to interpret literary texts along the "correct" ideological lines so that the reader would be better aware of the message implicit within the text. The critic's duty was arguably one of political rather than artistic interpretation.

The "Yan'an Talks" continued to uphold "realism" - the ideologically correct form of "realism" - as the preferred mode for literary creation. "Socialist realism" (shehui zhuyi xianshi zhuyi), as it was adopted in the Soviet Union in the 1930s, was introduced as a Marxist form of "realism" set up in opposition to "critical realism". It represented society in a

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[31]Pickowicz, p.365.

positive light, presenting a vision of society as it ought to be, rather than as it actually was. Abrams offers a concise definition of "socialist realism":

> In its crude version, it [socialist realism] was a term of approbation applied mainly to novels which adhere to the Communist party line, and emphasize the oppressions by bourgeois capitalists, the virtues of the proletariat, and the felicities of life under socialism.[32]

Throughout the 1950s China's leading literary theoretician Zhou Yang (1907-1989) promoted Soviet socialist realism as "the road ahead for Chinese literature."[33] When theories of "socialist realism" were propagated in China, they appeared under the rather grandiloquent epithet of "the synthesis of revolutionary realism and revolutionary romanticism" (geming xianshi zhuyi he geming langman zhuyi xiang jiehe). This slogan was introduced by Mao Zedong in March 1958. It stressed the ideal above the real, captured "the mystical élan" of the idealized communist hero, and portrayed events as they would exist in the ideal state of communism.[34] The qualifying adjective "revolutionary" doubtless implied a sense of "evolution" or advancement in society. In portraying a romanticized vision of reality, a combination of "revolutionary realism" and "revolutionary romanticism" was unable to accommodate tragic endings. These were viewed as the sole privilege of the now outmoded "critical realism".[35]

Literary theory of the Cultural Revolution period continued to promote the synthesis of "revolutionary realism" and "revolutionary romanticism" as

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[32]Abrams, p.176.

[33]Zhou Yang, "Shehui zhuyi xianshi zhuyi - Zhongguo wenxue qianjin de daolu" (Socialist Realism - The Road Ahead for Chinese Literature), Renmin ribao (People's Daily), 11 January 1953. The article was originally written at the request of the Soviet literary world and simultaneously appeared in Pravda.

[34]Larson, "Realism," p.41.

[35]Feuerwerker, p.53.

the only acceptable mode of literary creation. The most influential document governing literature during the Cultural Revolution was the pompously titled "Summary of the Forum on the Work of Literature and Art in the Armed Forces with which Lin Biao Entrusted Jiang Qing", which was concocted in February 1966. The "Summary" rejected all the "realist" literature of the 1920s and 1930s, especially that created under the banner of the League of Left Wing Writers, as tainted by "bourgeois nationalism". It furthermore denounced the literature published in the first seventeen years of the PRC as influenced by "the dictatorship of a black anti-Party and anti-socialist line."[36] It held up the literary line promulgated by Mao at Yan'an in 1942, but consistently misquoted it, thereby giving rise to a literary document suited to the ideological needs of the "ultra leftist" clique coalescing around Jiang Qing. The "Summary" concluded by outlining the "basic task" (genben renwu) that writers had to keep in mind while creating: "with our bosoms filled with fervour, we should strive to create heroic characters from among workers, peasants and soldiers..."[37]

In the post-Mao era a more critical "realism" was again adopted as the officially prescribed literary ideology. It was perceived as toppling from power the extreme leftist idealized "realism" of the previous decades and heralded a return to the realist "tradition" of pre-1949 fiction.[38] After decades of uncertainty, writers, as well as literary policy-makers, were content with the relative familiarity and safety of "realism" as an official

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[36]The "Summary" (Lin Biao weituo Jiang Qing zhaokai de budui wenyi gongzuo zuotanhui jiyao) appeared in Hongqi (Red Flag), September 1967. See also Cheng Jin, p.40.

[37]Zhu Zhai, p.506.

[38]Anderson, p.4.

medium with which to work. In direct contrast to "revolutionary realism", and perhaps sharing something in common with "critical realism", the "realist" works of the post-Mao period reflected the darker side of contemporary society.

In the immediate post-Mao period, Chinese critics continued to view literature from a Marxist standpoint. It is noticeable that the evolution of "realism" in 20th century China adhered closely to any ideological developments in the Marxist literary line. In the late 1970s it was not uncommon to read criticisms of contemporary literature heavily punctuated by quotations from Marx and Engels on literature. It is by no means a coincidence that the first post-Mao promulgation of a "new" literary line occurred in May 1977 on the 35th anniversary of Mao's "Yan'an Talks". It is also worth noting, as Anderson has done, that the literature of each major period of political thaw in post-1949 China has been "applauded as a salutary return to the 'realist' tradition of pre-Liberation fiction."[39]

The short stories published in 1979, especially in the official journals, should, in the light of these comments, be indicative of a return to a more critical "realism". More interesting, however, are the editorial board's comments in the inaugural edition of the nonofficial journal Jintian. Although not beholden to the strictures of the official literary authorities as regards the propagation of "realism" as the preferred literary mode, Jintian's editors chose to legitimize their views by perceiving them in the light of the May Fourth Movement and as upholding the "realist" works

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[39]Anderson, p.4.

which had "earned merits in the history of our country's literature" since 1919.[40]

2.3 CHINESE LITERARY CRITICISM IN THE POST-MAO ERA

Immediately following the fall of the Gang of Four literary criticism was pressed into service to join the political vituperation against the Gang's activities. Initial post-Mao literary criticism was therefore highly politicized. Its objurgatory language went to great lengths to discredit the political persona of the Gang of Four via nothing more than very tenuous literary links. Much of this criticism was put out by the "criticism group" (pipanzu) of the Ministry of Culture and appeared in the pages of Renmin ribao (People's Daily). Between November 1976 and May 1977, through a series of articles, the "criticism group" systematically denounced many of the literary theories advocated by the Gang of Four: characterization according to the "three prominences" (san tuchu); Jiang Qing's role in revising the yangbanxi model operas; the requirement of literary works to write of "the struggle against capitalist roaders" and so forth.[41]

Aside from denouncing the Gang of Four, these criticisms urged literary and art workers to raise the "magnificent banner" of the Maoist literary

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[40]"Zhi duzhe" (To the Readers), Jintian, 1 (23 December 1978); here quoted from the English translation, JPRS, 74909 (11 November 1980), pp.20-21.

[41]See the articles "'Sirenbang' guchui 'xie yu zouzipai zuo douzheng de zuopin' de fandong shizhi" (The Reactionary Essence of the Gang of Four's Advocation of "Writing Literary Works Struggling against the Capitalist Roaders"), Renmin ribao, 23 November 1976; "Huan lishi yi benlai mianmu" (Revealing History in its True Colours), Renmin ribao, 13 February 1977; "Ping 'san tuchu'" (Criticizing the "Three Prominences"), Renmin ribao, 18 May 1977.

line. A Renmin ribao editorial of 23 May 1977, planned to coincide with the 35th anniversary of the "Yan'an Talks", suggested that this "magnificent banner" should be raised even higher.[42] In November 1977, when the first work later to be labelled "literature of the scars" was published, the editorial department of Renmin ribao convened a series of debates attended by a number of renowned writers aimed at criticizing the literary policies of the Gang of Four.[43] Before critics had any "new-style" literary works upon which to comment, and even for several months after their publication, Chinese literary criticism consisted of denunciation of the Gang of Four and glorification of the Maoist literary line.

In the late spring of 1978 the Chinese Federation of Literary and Art Circles held its first large-scale committee meeting since the death of Mao. It heralded the return to work of many literary and art organizations and their associated journals. On 5 June 1978 the Federation passed a resolution ratifying a three-pronged approach to literary creation: (1) literature was to continue serving workers, peasants and soldiers; (2) writers were still to familiarize themselves with Marxism; and (3) writers still had to denounce the Gang of Four.[44]

"Literature of the scars" (shanghen wenxue) dominated the Chinese literary sphere throughout 1978. Its name derived from Lu Xinhua's short

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[42]"Genggaodi juqi Mao Zhuxi geming wenyi luxian de weida qizhi" (Raise the Great Banner of Chairman Mao's Revolutionary Literary Line Even Higher), Renmin ribao, 23 May 1977.

[43]"Jianjue tuidao, chedi pipan 'wenyi heixian zhuanzheng' lun" (Resolutely Repudiate and Thoroughly Criticize the Theory of "Dictatorship of the Literary Black Line"), Renmin ribao, 25 November 1977.

[44]These events are chronicled in Renmin ribao, 6 June 1978.

story "Shanghen" (The Scar) which was published by Shanghai's Wenhui bao (Wenhui Gazette) in August 1978, and which was arguably the first literary work in the post-Mao period "to touch upon a forbidden zone by reflecting tragedies that really existed in the socialist period."[45] Literary depiction of the scars inflicted upon the nation during the Cultural Revolution first came to light in November 1977 with the publication of Liu Xinwu's "Ban zhuren" (The Class Teacher).[46] The same issue of Renmin wenxue that published Liu's story carried a report on and a collection of essays aired at a meeting convened by the journal's editorial board aimed at promoting "the blooming of a hundred flowers" in the short story. In many respects, "The Class Teacher" may be perceived both as a work written in response to the views aired at this meeting and as an example of the type of "new-style" short stories being advocated. Its publication led to a spate of short stories exploring the spiritual damage done to the younger generation during the Cultural Revolution. These stories appeared in a number of provincial literary journals during the first half of 1978, some of them written by established authors such as Wu Qiang and Wang Meng.[47]

The political authorities were seemingly content to allow "literature of the scars" to be published, albeit within highly-controlled limits. Not only did it foster popular anger against the Gang of Four but, by extension, it also increased the prestige of the regime that had overthrown the Gang. In short, "literature of the scars" met the political and ideological demands of

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[45]He Yuhuai, p.91.

[46]Renmin wenxue, November 1977, pp.16-29.

[47]Wu Qiang, "Linghun de bodou" (Struggle of the Soul), Shanghai wenyi (Shanghai Literature and Art), May 1978, pp.51-60; Wang Meng, "Zui baoguide" (Most Precious), Zuopin, July 1978; see also Lu Wenfu, "Xianshen" (Dedication), Renmin wenxue, April 1978, pp.28-38.

the leadership of the day while failing to break any artistic ground. This apparent lack of spontaneity and literary innovation only increased Western criticism of the short stories. Marián Gálik, for example, has argued that the sacrifice made to political conformity by "literature of the scars" far exceeded the "adequate and justified needs" of the artistic development of Chinese literature.[48] However, the same political conformity assured Chinese critics, who were as unwilling to stick their necks out as writers were to create controversial works, that it was safe to welcome, at least for the time being, "literature of the scars" into the literary arena.

In September 1978 the editorial department of Wenyi bao (Literature and Art Gazette), the official organ of the Federation of Literary and Art Circles, convened two meetings to discuss the "new" literature critical of the Gang of Four. Although the meeting recognized that those stories revealed "inner scars" (neishang) of the characters, the term "literature of the scars" had not yet passed into popular usage.

The first meeting was held in Beijing. It welcomed the new "atmosphere" (qixiang) and the "breakthrough" (tupo) signalled by the "new" literature. The meeting concluded that those writers who failed to reflect the inner scars of workers and peasants were actually neglecting their duties. The reflection of these scars, it was deemed, met with the reality of life and, therefore, marked a return to the tradition of "revolutionary realism". In response to recent dismissals of the new stories as "exposure literature" (baolu wenxue),[49] the meeting declared that it was important to recognize

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[48]Gálik, "Some Remarks," p.73.
[49]Yi Hong, "Shi 'baolu wenxue' ma?" (Is It "Exposure Literature"?),

exactly what was being exposed. Exposure of the evils of the Gang of Four was perfectly justified and showed the author's standpoint to be ideologically correct. The second meeting, which was held in Shanghai, merely endorsed the views of the first. It concluded that the "new" literature should be encouraged as it was "realistic". Exposure of the Gang of Four was a valid, even an obligatory, course for the young writer to pursue.[50]

Towards the end of 1978, when the new political policies were crystallized at the Third Plenum, "literature of the scars" had become accepted as an officially endorsed mode of creation for fiction. There were, nonetheless, still those critics who spoke out in opposition of the new trend. These critics were influenced by the ideology of the "whateverist" faction coalescing aroung Hua Guofeng, rather than the "reformist" ideology of Deng Xiaoping. They perceived what they termed "exposure literature" as a possible threat not only to the socialist system but also to Hua's position as CCP chairman.[51] Many of the editors of the literary journals which carried the criticisms were supporters of Deng. The views of these "dissenting" critics were therefore more easily suppressed, and what debate there was, was conducted against a "silent opposition".[52] There are also indications that in September 1978 Hua Guofeng himself said in a private

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Wenyi bao, No.2 (August) 1978, p.32.

[50]For more details on the two meetings and synopses of speeches by, among others, Chen Huangmei, Li Zhun, Liu Xinwu and chairperson Luo Sun, see "Duanpian xiaoshuo de xin qixiang, xin tupo" (The New Atmosphere and New Breakthrough in Short Stories), Wenyi bao, No.4 (October) 1978.

[51]Kam Louie, "Discussions on Exposure Literature since the Fall of the Gang of Four," Contemporary China, Vol.3 No.4, Winter 1979, p.93.

[52]Louie, "Discussions," p.93.

meeting that so-called "exposure literature" should be suppressed and not allowed to flourish.[53]

By the close of 1978 editors of literary journals had already begun to refuse manuscripts written in the "scars" mode. They recognized that "literature of the scars" was "poisoned by the same set of false theories" as the literature of the Cultural Revolution period in that it was created according to a set pattern. Some editors received, and promptly rejected, thousands of manuscripts in the same mould.[54] An article appearing in Wenyi bao in December 1978 poked fun at the formulaic nature of "literature of the scars". It bemoaned the fact that most of the manuscripts it received were copied from currently popular modes and that they were very similar in plot and construction. The article provided its own plot synopsis which would work for any story in the "scars" mode:

> An old cadre or scientist resuming work after coming under attack during the Cultural Revolution, and an ignorant, slogan-mouthing cadre who has shot into prominence from being a Cultural Revolution rebel and generally has connections with the highest levels. The latter makes trouble for the former. The story generally deals with the struggle between the two and ends with the veteran's victory after the fall of the Gang of Four...[55]

Those émigré youths from the PRC who were in Hong Kong by the late 1970s also dismissed "literature of the scars" as a new type of "model" writing. They felt that writers were unable to depict the reality of life after thirty years of political fettering by the CCP authorities.[56]

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[53]Louie, "Discussions," p.95.

[54]Link, Mandarin Ducks, p.243; He Yuhuai, p.83.

[55]The article is by Guan Jian and appeared in Wenyi bao, No.6 (December) 1978; quoted from Jenner, p.280.

[56]Chou Yü-shan, "Communist China's 'Scar Literature'," Issues and Studies, February 1980, p.66.

In the first half of 1979 criticisms of "literature of the scars" continued to appear in provincial journals. Deng's speech on the "four fundamental principles" in late March heralding a less tolerant trend in the political sphere prompted a number of literary theorists and policy-makers into adopting a more conservative line. Huang Ansi had long been an influential figure holding propaganda and culture posts in Guangdong province. In April 1979 he published an essay in Guangzhou ribao (Guangzhou Daily), the official organ of the Guangzhou municipal CCP committee, which complained that most recent literature had been "backward-looking" (xianghou kan) instead of "forward-looking" (xiangqian kan).[57] In Huang's view literature should desist from exploring personal tragedy and examining the social problems caused by the Gang of Four. It should extol the virtues of the new society by "looking forward" to realization of the Four Modernizations.

Huang's essay had a negative effect on local literary journals, most especially Zuopin. Fearful of anticipated reprisals, some writers stopped writing altogether. A number of them were reported to be preparing self-criticisms. Zuopin's editorial board also acted swiftly by putting aside a short story exposing the evils of the Gang of Four. In May 1979 the Guangdong branch of the Chinese Writers' Union held formal discussions on controversial works and the current situation in the hope of reducing the uneasiness among its writers and editors.[58] At the same time a number of

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[57]Huang Ansi, "Xiangqian kan a, wenyi" (Look Forward! Literature and Art), Guangzhou ribao (Guangzhou Daily), 15 April 1979, p.3.

[58]He Yuhuai, p.100.

articles appeared in local publications denouncing Huang for attempting to set up new "forbidden areas" (jingu) for writers.[59]

An article published in Hebei province in June 1979 resulted in a more important controversy. The young critic Li Jian maintained that recent literature had been "lacking virtue" (quede) when it should have been "praising virtue" (gede).[60] Despite condemnation of the Gang of Four, Li's argument was typical of that of the Cultural Revolution, especially with regard to its vitriolic style. It also refused to concede that there were problems in contemporary society, viewing it as perfect. That this relatively obscure article should later have been singled out for national criticism suggests that the literary authorities wanted to use the article to suppress criticism of the freedoms writers were beginning to enjoy.[61] Li Jian's inflammatory critique was not, however, totally his own work. Li's "backstage support" came in the form of poet Tian Jian (1916-1985) who at the time was a leading figure in Hebei cultural circles. Tian was eager to prove his loyalty to the CCP at a time when, in some areas, the new literature was being denounced as opposing the Maoist literary line. Fearful of yet another clampdown on literary freedom, Tian acted swiftly and, as history has proven, somewhat rashly.[62] It was nonetheless Li Jian and not

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[59]See for example A Shu, "Buyao youlai yige 'huadi weilao'" (Let's Not Have Another "Delimiting of Boundaries"), Nanfang ribao (Southern Daily), 11 May 1979, p.3.

[60]Li Jian, "'Gede' yu 'quede'" ("Praising Virtue" and "Lacking Virtue"), Hebei wenyi (Hebei Literature and Art), June 1979, p.5; the article was reprinted alongside counter-criticisms in Renmin ribao, 31 July 1979, p.3.

[61]Richard King, "'Wounds' and 'Exposure': Chinese Literature after the Gang of Four," Pacific Affairs, 54.1 (Spring 1981), p.88.

[62]Luo Bing, "Zhaodaole 'gedepai' de muhouren" (The Backstage Support of the "Praising Virtue Faction" Uncovered), Zhengming (Contention), September 1979, pp.11-13.

Tian Jian who suffered at the hands of scathing critics when the argument for "praising virtue" was attacked by leading critics in the national press.

During the first months of 1979, many of those writers who had been labelled "rightists" (youpai fenzi) in 1957, and thereafter effectively forbidden from publication for two decades, were politically exonerated. As the Gang of Four and the Cultural Revolution could not be held responsible for the initial sufferings of these writers, in their writings they sought reasons for their persecution in the early years of the PRC. Moreover, the exonerated writers perceived the policies pursued by Deng's "reformist" faction as similar in substance to those practised in the years preceding their persecution. In an attempt to identify the deeper causes of the malaise inflicted upon the nation during their years of enforced ostracism, the middle-aged writers turned their attention to the sociopolitical situation in the mid-1950s, almost sidestepping the Cultural Revolution period.

The 1979 fiction of the rehabilitated writers continued to uphold a similar "realism" to that found in "literature of the scars". Chinese critics viewed this fiction in terms of a linear development from "literature of the scars". It was allegedly nurtured under similar social conditions, yet deepened the historical context, veering away from the psychological legacy of the Cultural Revolution, reflecting on problems from earlier decades in contemporary history.[63] Whereas "literature of the scars" concluded that the Cultural Revolution had been caused by the Gang of Four, this fiction

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[63]Zhang Zhong, p.488.

indicated that the Cultural Revolution had been caused by flaws in and arrogation of the socialist system since the mid-1950s.

Mainland and Overseas Chinese critics have referred to this fiction in different terms. In the PRC the term generally used is "retrospective" or "re-thinking" fiction (fansi xiaoshuo). Fansi is probably a contraction of the phrase fangu sikao, which literally means "looking back and thinking deeply", suggesting a kind of retrospective introspection.[64] Along similar lines Yuan-huang Tsai suggests that fansi is possibly a euphemism for "self-examination" (fanxing).[65] More precisely, "retrospective fiction" presented a reconsideration of post-1957 Chinese history, bringing into question the accepted CCP version of that history.

In Hong Kong "retrospective fiction" was collated in a volume edited by Lee Yee and published in June 1980.[66] The term used in the volume is "new realism" or "neo-realism" (xin xieshi zhuyi). Neo-realism suggests something more than merely a resurgence in realist fiction. As a recognized literary term, it generally refers to a revival in fiction describing the lives of the poor in a contemporary setting.[67] Neo-realism is particularly associated with dominant trends in post-War Italian and Portuguese fiction. There are similarities in theme between this and Chinese "retrospective fiction". On a basic level, both trends appear as "human documentary

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[64]Zhang Zhong, p.488.
[65]Yuan-huang Tsai, "The Second Wave: Recent Developments in Mainland Chinese Literature," Issues and Studies, August 1989, p.13.
[66]Lee Yee, ed., Zhongguo xinxieshi zhuyi wenyi zuopinxuan (The New Realism), Hong Kong: Dangdai wenyi yanjiu she, 1980.
[67]Baldick, p.149.

touched up with art" and "reportage of the painful aspects of social life."[68] More importantly they are both concerned with the realistic interpretation of a corrupt and cruel society, and in particular the psychological and cultural declivity of its people.

In 1980 literary theoretician Zhou Yang articulated his disapproval of terming post-1976 works as neo-realist. In his view, treating the revolutionary works of the 1930s, 40s and 50s as a kind of "palaeo-realism" (jiu xianshi zhuyi) merely served to negate their obvious inheritance of the realist tradition established during the May Fourth era. Zhou upheld the official line that post-1976 works were a continuation of this tradition, rather than being indicative of a separate or "new" kind of realism.[69] Fearful of any recrimination which might befall them and eager to remain within the main current of cultural progress, the middle-aged writers overtly supported the view that their fiction was a continuation of the "realist" legacy of the May Fourth era.

Although "literature of the scars" appears to have been written in response to (literary and critical) criticism, during 1979 official criticism was much slower to react to the increasing number of literary works published. While critics continued to harp on about the moral and ideological unsuitability of exposing the ills of the recent past, fiction published in official journals was beginning to widen the scope of this

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[68]Jaime Brasil, "Os Novos Escritores e o Movimento Chamado NEO-REALISMO," in George J. Becker, ed., Documents of Modern Literary Criticism, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963, p.477.

[69]Zhou Yang, "Jiefang sixiang, zhenshi biaoxian women de shidai" (Emancipate Thought, Realistically Express Our Times), Wenyi bao, No.4 (22 February) 1981, p.7.

exploration into both past and present. By the time the critical world had digested the impact of "retrospective fiction" and was ready to comment on it, the base of cultural activity had matured sufficiently to prevent critics speaking out against it in large numbers. While individual works were singled out for (generally negative) criticism, commenting on that work's ideology rather than its artistry, counter-criticisms appeared almost immediately to redress the balance. The literary authorities were still very much in control, and acted to foster or suppress the criticism of works they deemed acceptable or otherwise.

But what of literary criticism in the nonofficial journals? In the course of its nine issues, Jintian only published two critiques specifically devoted to contemporary Chinese fiction. In July 1980 Jiu Min wrote on the short stories that had been published in Jintian.[70] Jiu stated that during the period of "literature of the scars", the nation began to "cry in pain" after the "anaesthetic" of political repression had worn off. Whereas "literature of the scars" directly bemoaned this pain without offering any explanations, the fiction in Jintian "calmly looked at the wound, pondering as to how the wound could have been inflicted and studying the colour, lustre and composition of the blood."[71] Jiu continues that all writers should strive for reality (zhenshi) and avoid the "cheap habit" of descending into mawkishness. They should strive for a more spiritual meaning than the superficial political claims of official literature. Where the article agrees

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[70]Jiu Min, "Jintian duanpian xiaoshuo qiantan" (A Superficial Discussion of the Short Stories in Jintian), Jintian, No.9 (July 1980), pp.58-60.
[71]Jiu Min, p.58.

with official criticism is in its conclusion: the problem facing writers is not what to write but how to write.

The inaugural issue of Jintian carried Lin Zhong's criticism of the officially published story "Xinglai ba didi" (Wake Up Brother) by Liu Xinwu.[72] This story examines the psychological degeneration of a young worker - the eponymous brother - and the successful efforts of a veteran cadre in awakening him from disillusionment through patriotism and love for the CCP. The brother's withdrawal from society clearly represents the psychological legacy of the Cultural Revolution. However, Lin Zhong took exception to Liu's claim that the brother's problems could be solved by re-embracing socialism. Lin argues that the brother was actually very clear-headed and recognized the nature of his deception by the system. It was therefore the author and not his character who needed to awaken to social reality. Lin concludes that misrepresentation of the experience of the youth marked a proclivity to dismiss the real problem in a language which was unable to express it adequately.

There were two main differences between literary criticism in the official and the nonofficial presses. Firstly, the two critiques of fiction published in Jintian discussed literature in terms of artistry and technique, rather than ideology or political conformity. As a result they refrained from offering a set of restrictive ideological guidelines for the writer to follow.

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[72]Lin Zhong, "Ping 'xinglai ba didi'" (Appraising "Wake Up Brother"), Jintian, No.1 (December 1978), pp.45-48; it was reprinted in a revised version as Lin Dazhong, "Kongsu wenxue ji qita" (Accusatory Literature and Others), Dushu (Reading), January 1979, pp.73-76. Liu Xinwu's story appeared in Zhongguo qingnian (China Youth), No.2 (11 October) 1978, pp.34-41.

Secondly, Lin Zhong made use of the freedoms offered by the nonofficial press to express dissatisfaction with fiction that had been officially endorsed. The ideological stance of these articles was not one endorsed by the CCP authorities. Literary criticism in the official journals, however, continued to adopt the prescriptive and didactic approach of the Marxist literary line. This approach criticized literary works only as a means of "reflecting" political, social and moral "reality".

2.4 A NOTE ON LITERARY GENERATIONS

A method of literary interpretation which gained in popularity during 1979 and the early 1980s among both Chinese and Western observers of post-Mao literature was that of literary generations. According to this method, writers, and by extension their writings, were classified on the basis of their age in relation to 20th century Chinese history. The foundations of the trend towards interpretation of literature according to generations among Chinese critics may be traced to the historian Li Zehou's 1979 book Zhongguo jindai sixiang shilun (Modern Chinese Intellectual History). In a passage evidently receiving much attention in China and among Western scholars of Chinese, Li divided 20th century Chinese intellectuals into six distinct generational groupings: (1) those who had led the revolution in 1911; (2) those of the May Fourth generation; (3) those active in the 1920s and early 1930s; (4) the generation of the Anti-Japanese War (1937-1945); (5) the generation of the 1940s and 1950s; and (6) the generation of the Cultural Revolution.[73]

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[73]Li Zehou, Zhongguo jindai sixiang shilun (Modern Chinese Intellectual History), Beijing, 1979, pp.470-471. See also Li Zehou and Vera Schwarcz,

In a later essay Li Zehou outlines two factors which influenced him in the development of his generational groupings. The first factor was Chinese in origin. Before his death in 1936, Lu Xun was apparently planning to write a long novel on four generations of intellectuals. Li loosely bases his generational patterning on the ideas developed by Lu Xun in the 1930s and, in line with historical advance, builds upon them. The second factor originated among Western sociologists. Li points to a trend in Western social science which suggests "an interconnection between generational succession and historical change".[74] Basing his ideas upon this, Li came to consider sociopolitical events in 20th century Chinese history as being influential in shaping the social life of his various generational groupings.

Li Zehou's definition of generation concords with the entry under "generations" in The International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, where a generation is defined as "a group of individuals who have undergone the same basic historical experience during their formative years."[75] The formative years are generally considered to be late adolescence and early adulthood (i.e. approximately 17 to 25 years of age) when a "distinct generational consciousness" may be seen to emerge.[76] Nevertheless, coevals are not necessarily affected in the same way by their common historical experience. Marc Bloch has aptly written on this point:

> Men who are born into the same social environment about the same time necessarily come under analogous influences, particularly in

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"Six Generations of Modern Chinese Intellectuals," Chinese Studies in History, 17.2 (Winter 1983-84), pp.42-56.

[74]Li and Schwarcz, p.43.

[75]Marvin Rintala, "Generations: Political Generations," in David L. Sills, ed., The International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, New York, 1968, Vol.6, p.93.

[76]Rintala, p.93.

> their formative years. Experience proves that, by comparison with either considerably older or considerably younger groups, their behavior reveals certain distinctive characteristics which are ordinarily very clear. This is true even of their bitterest disagreements. To be excited by the same dispute, even on opposing sides, is still to be alike. This common stamp, deriving from common age, is what makes a generation.[77]

A similar premise is expounded by Zhang Yongjie and Cheng Yuanzhong who, in writing about the generation gap (daigou) in post-Mao China, state that in general "in comparison with other generations, people of the same generation will always have many more similarities."[78]

Li Zehou emphasizes that his generational schematic is merely an "incipient exploration" of the methodology of contemporary intellectual thinking.[79] Moreover, the placing of a individual into his or her generation has been deemed a "difficult and complex undertaking."[80] Nevertheless, a number of both Chinese and Western scholars have attempted to place generational interpretations on contemporary Chinese phenomena. For example, in the late 1960s William Whitson wrote of military generations in China, and in 1979 Michael Yahuda published an article on Chinese political generations.[81] Whitson and Yahuda's works were clearly written before Li Zehou published his thoughts on generations. However, despite the

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[77]Marc Bloch, The Historian's Craft, (1954), quoted in Leo Ou-fan Lee, The Romantic Generation of Modern Chinese Writers, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973, p.185.

[78]Zhang Yongjie and Cheng Yuanzhong, eds., Disi dai ren (The Fourth Generation), Beijing: Dongfang chubanshe, 1988, p.13.

[79]Li and Schwarcz, p.55.

[80]Li and Schwarcz, p.46.

[81]William W. Whitson, "The Concept of Military Generation: The Chinese Communist Case," Asian Survey, Vol.VIII No.11 (November 1968), pp.921-47; Michael Yahuda, "Political Generations in China," China Quarterly, 80 (1979), pp.793-805.

understandably different terminology used, the generational groupings to which they refer remain more or less constant with the pattern later outlined by Li.

What of the literary generation? Li Zehou's generational schematic makes no mention of writers or literary works, rather it refers to the broader category of the intellectual. In the Chinese sense, writers fall into the category of "intellectuals" (zhishi fenzi). Any pattern applicable to intellectuals should therefore also be applicable to writers. Moreover, literary and historical analysts in the PRC of the late 1970s were equally beholden to the same political line and, by extension, the same interpretation of historical events. Li Zehou's writings were influential not only because they brought the concept of generations into Chinese scholarly debate, but also because they provided a "politically correct" concept which could have a number of applications in the cultural sphere.

An article published in 1982 was probably the first serious discussion of literary generations by Chinese literary commentators. In the article, Feng Mu (then chief editor of Wenyi bao) and Liu Xicheng (then vice-director of Wenyi bao's editorial department) promoted the theory of literary generations as an important trend in recent Chinese writing.[82] Their division of literary generations conforms both to the patterning established by Li Zehou and also to the official CCP perception of 20th century literary and historical development. These generations are primarily divided in terms of sociopolitical events in Chinese history: the May Fourth Movement,

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[82]Feng and Liu, pp.16-18.

the Anti-Japanese War, the initial years of the PRC, and the Cultural Revolution. Implicit in this generational patterning is also the sense of a linear evolution in literary "realism" from the writings of the veteran writers of the 1920s through to those of the young writers in the post-Mao era. Feng and Liu's article is, however, notable in its failure to discuss in any great detail the similarities in literary output among the writers of the same generation, or how this output differed from that of the other generations.

Although discussion of sociological generations by Western scholars is well documented, in Western literary critical history there are only one or two obscure articles referring to specific literary generations.[83] The Spanish sociologist José Ortega y Gasset has even argued that there is no such thing, properly speaking, as a purely literary generation. It should be apprehended as a "subgroup" within the sociological definition of generation which shows how sociopolitical events affect literary creation.[84] Discussion of literary generation therefore emphasizes the sociopolitical rather than the literary aspect. The few Western theoretical articles on the subject attest to this.

In 1973, before Western commentators on contemporary Chinese literature had adopted literary generations as an analytical "tool", Leo Ou-fan Lee wrote of a "romantic generation" of writers in the post-May Fourth period.

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[83]Julius Petersen, "Die Literarischen Generationen," in Emil Ermatinger, Philosphie der Literaturwissenschaft, Berlin, 1930, pp.130-187; Henri Peyre, Les Générations Littéraires, Paris, 1948.

[84]Julián Mariás, "Generations: The Concept," in David Sills, ed., The International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, New York, 1968, p.91.

Lee upholds the sociological definition of generations by arguing that those writers pursuing "romanticism" shared a sense of "group consciousness" due to similar experiences during their formative years: rejection of the traditional milieu, education abroad, introduction of Western morals and thoughts to China, and participation in the May Fourth Movement.[85] Despite its reference to generation, Lee's work must be viewed as separate from the trend among 1980s Western critics of Chinese literature to adopt the generational approach. Firstly, it is restricted to one generation. Secondly, it refrains either from dividing Chinese writers into a number of sociopolitical generations or from commenting on the situation in post-1949 China.

Along similar lines to Leo Lee's "romantic generation", in 1983 Helen Siu and Zelda Stern also wrote of one generation of writers: the "Mao generation" who took up the pen in the post-Cultural Revolution period.[86] These writers, born between 1940 and 1957, share the "group consciousness" of undergoing pre-Cultural Revolution Maoist indoctrination in primary and secondary schools. In this respect they form the sixth of Li Zehou's generational groupings, that is, the generation of the Cultural Revolution. They are also part of a wider phenomenon which was designated the "lost generation" (shiluo de yidai) in the Chinese press. Although they had been raised as the "torchbearers" of the Chinese revolution, two events during the formative years of this generation turned them from "fanatical revolutionaries" into "disillusioned, defiant and critical individuals."[87] Following their participation in the Red Guard Movement,

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[85]Leo Lee, Romantic Generation, p.248.
[86]Siu and Stern, passim.
[87]Laifong Leung, Morning Sun: Interviews with Chinese Writers of the

these young people realized they had been used as tools in the political struggle. Their subsequent enforced rustication, which brought home to them the failure of socialist policy in the countryside, left them all the more disaffected. However, apprehending all those young writers who began publishing after 1976 as belonging to the "lost generation" appears to be plausible only from a sociopolitical viewpoint. It fails to account, for example, for the reasons why some of these writers should contribute conformist works to official journals while others contributed highly innovative works to nonofficial journals. Such inconsistencies can only bring into question the validity of a generational interpretation of literature.

A number of the Western scholars analysing post-Mao Chinese literature from sociopolitical, rather than literary, standpoints have also adopted the generational approach. In a wider discussion on the relationship of the contemporary Chinese writer to his or her sociopolitical environment, Perry Link has proposed a scheme of generational division of writers as a possible method of interpreting post-Mao literature.[88] Rather than dividing the generations according to sociopolitical criteria, Link divides them biologically, that is, whether they were old, middle-aged or young in the late 1970s. However, by referring to the distinct sociopolitical events which tempered each biological generation, Link's generational schematic also conforms to the sociological pattern. The "old generation" referred to those writers who began publishing in the post-May Fourth period and who were still active in the late 1970s. Both as a result of their old age and the

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Lost Generation, Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1994, p.xvii.

[88]Link, Roses and Thorns, pp.32-36.

persecution they had suffered during the Cultural Revolution, these literary veterans were content to "remain somewhat aloof from" the innovations of the post-Mao literary scene.[89] The "middle-aged generation" referred to those writers who had begun publishing in the enthusiastic early years of the PRC, but who had fallen foul of the Maoist regime in the late 1950s and 1960s. Following political exoneration in the late 1970s, these writers once again became very active on the literary stage. The "young generation" is little different from the aforementioned "lost generation".

The first Western study devoted entirely to contemporary Chinese literary generations was aired by Helmut Martin at the Cologne Workshop in 1984.[90] Martin fails to credit any Chinese influence on the formulation of his generational schematic and attempts to give his work credibility by referring to obscure Western works on literary generations. Martin's schematic is meticulously detailed and is accompanied by a panoply of lengthy quotations from Chinese writers about their personal "positioning" in the generational hierarchy. The orderliness of the categorizations suggests distinct socio-historical boundaries between generations and, by extension, separates the types of works writers were expected to write.

In general, Martin's categorization of literary generations is remarkably similar to that propounded by other commentators. Where it does differ, however, is in the division of the "lost generation" into two separate entities. Although he refers to those writers born after 1949 as all being

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[89]Link, Roses and Thorns, p.33.

[90]Helmut Martin, "Daigou-Generationen: Chinesische Schriftsteller der achtziger Jahre," in Martin, ed., Cologne Workshop 1984 on Contemporary Chinese Literature, Köln: Deutsche Welle, 1986, pp.60-81.

part of a "sceptical generation", this may be further subdivided into the generation of the Cultural Revolution and the generation of the 1970s.[91] According to Martin, writers of the former generation were in employment by the start of the Cultural Revolution, while writers of the latter were still undergoing education. The naming of these two generations is somewhat misleading, for it was the latter group which was arguably more deeply affected by the Cultural Revolution. In further qualifying the make-up of the "lost generation", Martin may be seen as attempting to explain the aforementioned differences in literary output among its number. However, he offers no further evidence, either literary or sociological, to support his classification of literary generations.

Despite an evident trend among certain commentators in China and the West to interpret Chinese literature according to literary generations, these commentators tended to proffer their own variant of the generational schematic without setting about proving the validity of that schematic. The Chinese commentators may be seen as following in the footsteps of Li Zehou, whose seminal work on generational classification was influential in scholarly circles. The Western commentators make no attempt to mention, let alone acknowledge the influence of, the Chinese trend for categorizing writers according to generations. It must surely be more than coincidence that a number of Chinese and Western scholars should adopt a very similar approach to literary interpretation in such a short period of time without there being an influence between the two.

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[91]Martin, p.61.

2.5 WESTERN CRITICISM OF POST-MAO CHINESE LITERATURE

Apart from "literary generations", what other methods of interpretation have Western scholars employed to analyse post-Mao Chinese fiction? There are two basic approaches to literary criticism, an extrinsic one and an intrinsic one. The extrinsic approach maintains that a work of literature should be investigated through external causes. Literature is the product of an individual author and can be examined through the biography and psychology of that author. As René Wellek and Austin Warren have argued, "explanation in terms of the personality and life of the writer has been one of the oldest and best-established methods of literary study."[92] A literary work is also the product of the economic, social and political conditions in which it was created. It may point to some quintessential spirit or intellectual atmosphere at the time of its production.[93] The intrinsic approach emphasizes the interpretation and analysis of the work itself, an autonomous entity resulting from the inspiration and artistry of an individual author.[94]

The mainstream of Western literary criticism in the 20th century has moved away from the extrinsic towards a more intrinsic approach. In the 1920s the Russian Formalists initiated this trend by emphasizing the formal patterns and technical devices of literature to the exclusion of its subject

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[92]Wellek and Warren, p.75.
[93]Wellek and Warren, p.73.
[94]Merle Goldman, "Introduction," in Goldman, ed., Modern Chinese Literature in the May Fourth Era, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977, p.4.

matter and social values.[95] New Criticism, which dominated American literary criticism from the 1940s until the 1960s, continued the trend by eschewing reference to the biography of the author and social conditions at the time of creation, and focussing on the literary work in isolation. Through theories such as the "intentional fallacy" and "explication" (that is, a close reading of the text), the New Critics insisted that the proper concern of literary criticism "is not with the external circumstances of effects of a work, but with a detailed consideration of the work itself."[96] Structuralist criticism, which was popularized in the 1960s and 1970s among French literary theorists, took the analysis of literature into the realm of linguistics. Structuralist criticism is less interested in interpreting what literary works mean than in explaining how they they can mean what they mean: that is, in showing what implicit rules and conventions are operating in a given work.[97] Structuralism thus contrives to reject the notion that literature expresses an author's meaning or reflects reality and aims to, in the words of Jonathan Culler, "construct a poetics which stands to literature as linguistics stands to language."[98] Structuralist criticism has been strong in narratology, that is, the study of forms of narration and varieties of narrator within a literary text. Narratology is concerned with the identification of structural elements and narrative devices in order to determine the kinds of discourse by which a narrative is recounted.[99]

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[95]Abrams, p.273. For more on Russian Formalism see Victor Erlich, Russian Formalism: History, Doctrine (1981).

[96]Abrams, p.246. Wellek and Warren's Theory of Literature, which was the standard reference book in the graduate study of literature in American universities in the 1950s and 1960s, emphasizes the practice of New Criticism above other approaches.

[97]Baldick, p.214.

[98]Jonathan Culler, Structuralist Poetics (1975), p.257, quoted in Adams, p.281.

[99]Abrams, p.123.

In direct contrast to this trend, as has been argued above, Chinese literary critics in the Maoist era adopted the extrinsic approach of Marxist criticism. The traditional Marxist critic undertakes to explain a literary work not as an artifice created according to timeless artistic criteria, but as a "product" of the economic and ideological determinants of a specific historical era. As the Marxist literary line decrees that literature be "mimetic", that is, it should reflect "reality", Marxist criticism analyses a literary work in relation to the actual economic and social "reality" of the time in which it was produced.[100]

Most of the initial Western commentators on post-Mao literature were schooled in sinology and the political sciences rather than literary theory.[101] They therefore approached the study of literature as it commented on and was influenced by sociopolitical factors. In emphasizing the sociopolitical background in which a literary work was created, the biography of the author in relation to this background, and the response of the leadership to the work in questions, these scholars adopted an extrinsic approach. The lengthy introductions to a number of early anthologies of post-Mao fiction in translation, such as those edited by Perry Link or Helen Siu and Zelda Stern, clearly emphasize the sociopolitical and historical backgrounds in which the writers of the fiction were creating.[102] Later collections of scholarly articles on post-Mao

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[100]Abrams, p.242.

[101]Bonnie S. McDougall, "Preface," in McDougall, ed., Popular Chinese Literature and Performing Arts in the People's Republic of China 1949-1979, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984, p.xi.

[102]Siu and Stern, pp.i-xlviii; Perry Link, "Introduction: On the Mechanics of the Control of Literature in China," Stubborn Weeds, pp.1-26; Perry Link, "Introduction: Writers in the People's Republic," Roses and Thorns, pp.1-41.

literature, such as those edited by Jeffrey Kinkley and Helmut Martin, include a large number of essays discussing sociopolitical influences on literature.[103] The generational theory outlined in the previous section is another example of the sociopolitical, that is, extrinsic, approach to literary criticism.

For those scholars schooled in literary theory, immediate post-Mao literature, especially "literature of the scars", was perceived as a propaganda exercise rather than an exercise in creativity and therefore failed to attract the attention of literary scholars. It must not be forgotten also that in the late 1970s the sociopolitical influence on and control over literary production was particularly strong. That these scholars should want to gain further insight into the social conditions in China through literature is not surprising when one considers the dearth of available information. If literature was able to present an accurate picture of the times and society in which the author lived, then an extrinsic study of this literature would add to a sociopolitical survey of contemporary China.[104]

Early Western studies of "literature of the scars" recognized it as an important sociopolitical phenomenon, but generally condemned it as

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[103]Kinkley, After Mao; Martin, Cologne Workshop, especially Jean Philippe Béjà, "Chinese Writers as Spokesmen for Society since 1979," pp.100-107; David S.G. Goodman, "PRC Fiction and its Political Context, 1978-1982," pp.127-48; and Michel Bonin, "The Social Function of Chinese Literature since 1979: The Case of the 'Lost Generation'," pp.233-8. One might also mention Duke, Blooming and Contending; and Thomas Harnisch, China's Neue Literatur: Schriftsteller und ihre Kurzgeschichten in den Jahren 1978 und 1979, Bochum: Brockmeyer, 1985.

[104]Goldman, "Introduction," p.4. Although Goldman makes the point primarily about literature in the May Fourth era, it is of equal, in not greater, validity in the post-Mao era.

literature. One critic went as far as writing "quality, imaginative literature is still a distant dream in China" and that "literature of the scars" offered "no sophistication, no imagination, no style - in a word, no art."[105] Western critics failed to discuss "literature of the scars" from an intrinsic standpoint possibly because it was too superficial to stand up to criticism other than discussions of plot and theme. However, as Bonnie McDougall has argued, even "bad" literature has its "literary devices, structures, and genre requirements" and can therefore be of interest to literary scholars.[106] One exception to the extrinsic approach was Marián Gálik, who looked beyond the sociopolitical veneer to examine leitmotif and the allegorical nature of this literature. His conclusions were, however, all drawn from the sociopolitical influence on and impact of "literature of the scars".[107]

Initial studies of post-Mao literature by Western scholars appear not to have held individual literary works to scrutiny in any aspects deeper than analysis of plot and themes, and how these aspects related to the sociopolitical background. Where the intrinsic approach was adopted, to a

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[105]Howard Goldblatt, "Review of The Wounded," Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews, 2:1980, p.293. For more on Western studies of "literature of the scars" see King, "'Wounds' and 'Exposure'," pp.85-6; Duke, Blooming and Contending, pp.64-5; Joseph S.M. Lau, "The Wounded and the Fatigued: Reflections on Post-1976 Chinese Fiction," Journal of Oriental Studies, 20.2 (1982), pp.128-142. Lau makes some redeeming comments on "literature of the scars": "By Western standards even what passes for the most audacious in post-1978 writing looks tame indeed... But in a society where the term freedom of speech has remained a mocking reminder of its absence, what the shang-hen writers have done in the given circumstances has already won our respect and admiration" (p.134).

[106]McDougall, "Preface," p.xii.

[107]Gálik, "Some Remarks," pp.53-76. Gálik determined the "scar" as the leitmotif running through every work in "literature of the scars" and also is representative of the allegory of pain and suffering which lay behind its visible manifestation.

certain degree, was in the discussion of "modernist" techniques in a number of individual fictional works appearing in Jintian and also by Wang Meng. Anne Wedell-Wedellsborg analyses three short stories published in Jintian in 1979 from the points of view of experimentalism, levels of consciousness, use of symbolism and chronology of narrative, and concludes that they conform to an embryonic form of "modernism".[108] William Tay and Wendy Larson interpret the fiction of Wang Meng, especially his works of 1979 and 1980, in terms of textual structure and narrative modes, but continue to set the entire "modernism" debate in its sociopolitical context.[109]

By the mid-1980s Chinese fiction had developed greatly in complexity. Following the gradual rejection of the Marxist-Maoist literary line and challenges to "realism" as the key concept in literature, a number of Chinese writers began experimenting with literary style and technique.[110] Western critics - and also Chinese critics, mostly publishing in the late 1980s and the 1990s, began adopting the intrinsic approach to analyse this literature.[111] As it was marked by a greater maturity of creativity and

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[108]Anne Wedell-Wedellsborg, "Chinese Modernism?" in Helmut Martin, ed., Cologne-Workshop 1984 on Contemporary Chinese Literature, Köln: Deutsche Welle, 1986, pp.96-126.

[109]William Tay, "Wang Meng, Stream-of-Consciousness, and the Controversy over Modernism," Modern Chinese Literature, Vol.1 No.1, September 1984, pp.7-21; Wendy Larson, "The Chinese Intellectual and Negative Self Definition," Bolshevik Salute: A Modernist Chinese Novel, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1989, pp.133-54.

[110]Anne Wedell-Wedellsborg, "The Ambivalent Role of the Chinese Literary Critic in the 1980s," in Wendy Larson and Anne Wedell-Wedellsborg, eds., Inside Out: Modernism and Postmodernism in Chinese Literary Culture, Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1993, p.36.

[111]See especially Elly Hagenaar, Stream of Consciousness and Free Indirect Discourse in Modern Chinese Literature, Leiden: Centre of Non-Western Studies, 1992; and Larson and Wedell-Wedellsborg, Inside Out. A number of articles published in recent issues of Modern Chinese Literature

depth of artistry, this literature was arguably more able to withstand the rigours of the intrinsic approach than its predecessors. However, much of the fiction from 1979 has never been subjected to a purely intrinsic analysis by Western - or Chinese - literary critics.

2.6 SUGGESTED METHODS OF INTERPRETATION

Before establishing a method (or methods) of interpretation specifically suited to this study, a number of points require clarification. What is the value of adopting either an intrinsic or an extrinsic approach? Should critical methods developed in the West be adopted, or should the short stories in the database be analysed against the sociopolitical milieu in which they were created? Would a method of interpretation assimilating aspects of all these approaches be more appropriate?

In the 1960s Howard Boorman proposed three main "avenues" of approach to the interpretation of contemporary Chinese literature.[112] These approaches remain applicable to the examination of fiction from 1979. Firstly, literature may be subjected to a purely literary criticism. Such an approach would be predominantly aesthetic, emphasizing literature as an art form and exposing those unique qualities which inhere in a work of

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have also adopted the intrinsic approach, most notably Ying-hsiung Chou, "Romance of the Red Sorghum Family," Vol. 5 No.1 (Spring 1989), pp.33-41; Philip Williams, "A New Beginning for the Modernist Chinese Novel: Zhao Zhenkai's Bodong," Vol.5 No.1 (Spring 1989), pp.73-89. Milena Doleželová-Velingerová has adopted a structuralist approach to comment on Chinese fiction at the turn of the century. Dolezelová-Velingerová, ed., The Chinese Novel at the Turn of the Century, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980, especially her article "Typology of Plot Structure in Late Qing Novels," pp.38-56.

[112]Boorman, p.15.

literature. Secondly, literature may be viewed as a mirror on society, thereby acting as a source of data on the society producing it. Thirdly, literature may be viewed as the product of a particular set of sociopolitical conditions. These conditions would therefore imbue the literary works with a sense of historical perspective. The first of these three approaches may be determined as intrinsic whereas the latter two may be determined as extrinsic. Boorman concludes that the third approach is perhaps the most appropriate for analysing literature created according to the Marxist-Maoist literary line.[113]

Writing in the 1970s on May Fourth literature, Merle Goldman, a political historian rather than a literary scholar, defended the validity of adopting both the intrinsic and the extrinsic approaches in analysing literature.[114] The nature of Chinese society, both during the post-May Fourth period and more especially during the Maoist era, ensured that writers were committed firstly to society and then to art. In this case, Goldman contends, it would be prudent not to adopt a strictly literary or sociohistorical approach to literary criticism. A marriage of the intrinsic and extrinsic approaches is therefore preferable. Goldman concludes: "Because of the close relationship between literature and society, a creative synthesis of all these approaches is needed to understand both literature and the society in which it was created."[115]

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[113]Boorman, p.16.
[114]Goldman, "Introduction," p.7.
[115]Goldman, "Introduction," p.8.

Despite the general current of 20th century Western literary criticism away from the extrinsic to the intrinsic approach, a number of critics have still maintained that the sociopolitical context in which a literary work was produced remains relevant. For instance, Wellek and Warren point out that "a critic who is content to be ignorant of all historical relationships would constantly go astray in his judgement" for "through his ignorance of historical conditions, he would constantly blunder in his understanding of the specific works of art."[116] Applying the arguments of the 1940s Czech critic Felix Vodicka, Douwe Fokkema maintains that literary works should not be studied as isolated phenomena, but as "imbedded in their historical order."[117] Likewise, and in a specifically Chinese context, Bonnie McDougall has pointed out that criticism of contemporary Chinese literature has given "more than usual weight" to the extrinsic approach due to the inextricable relationship between literary development and sociopolitical background.[118]

Since the early 1980s, under the banner of New Historicism, a number of literary critics, in direct opposition to the intrinsic approach favoured by New Criticism, began studying literary works in their historical and political contexts.[119] Instead of interpreting a text in isolation from its sociopolitical context, New Historicists emphasize the historical and cultural conditions of its creation. However, New Historicism is not simply a return

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[116]Wellek and Warren, p.44.

[117]Douwe W. Fokkema, "New Strategies in the Comparative Study of Literature and Their Application to Contemporary Chinese Literature," in William Tay, Ying-hsiung Chou and Heh-hsiang Yuan, eds., China and the West: Comparative Literature Studies, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1980, p.5.

[118]McDougall, "Preface," p.xi.

[119]Baldick, p.150.

to an earlier kind of literary scholarship which "used political and intellectual history as a 'background' to account for the characteristic subject matter of literature at a particular time and place."[120] The literary text is not seen as "reflecting" an external reality, but consisting of "representations", that is, verbal formations which are the "ideological products" or "cultural constructs" of a particular era. In short, New Historicism suggests another re-take on the extrinsic approach.

Likewise, in Culture and Imperialism, Edward Said clarifies his preference for emphasizing the intrinsic and extrinsic approaches on an equal footing. Writing on the tendency to "specialize" in the intrinsic approach which had dominated recent literary criticism, Said claims that this approach "is contrary to an understanding of the whole."[121] He continues: "I do not believe that authors are mechanically determined by ideology, class, or economic history, but authors are, I also believe, very much in the history of their societies, shaping and shaped by that history and their social experience in different measure."[122]

Bearing in mind the heavy sociopolitical influence on literary production in China in the late 1970s, coupled with recent trends in Western literary criticism re-emphasizing the extrinsic approach, there is value in adopting this approach in interpreting the short stories in the database established

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[120]Abrams, p.249. For more on New Historicism see Stephen Greenblatt, "Towards a Poetics of Culture," in H. Aran Veeser, ed., The New Historicism (1989).

[121]Edward W. Said, Culture and Imperialism, London: Vintage, 1994, p.13.

[122]Said, p.xxiv.

in the previous chapter of this study. But what of the intrinsic approach which has dominated 20th century literary criticism in the West?

There are a number of persuasive arguments against the blind application of Western critical methods to the interpretation of Chinese literature. Heh-hsiang Yuan, whose comments on comparative literature have a possibly universal application, warns against imposing established Western critical methods on Chinese literature and expecting to find in Chinese literature types of literary expression which resemble those of the West, even superficially.[123] Fokkema has likewise argued that "the student who wishes to compare Chinese and Western literature cannot take for granted that the concept of the literary text in China and the West is identical, or even in a simple way comparable."[124] The intrinsic methods of literary criticism formulated during the course of the 20th century should, however, be applicable to any literary work, regardless of the conditions of its production. Moreover, all literary works consist of literary codes and devices which render them capable of scrutiny according to intrinsic methodology. In short, the arguments of Yuan and Fokkema advise caution and point out that no definitive cross-cultural literary patterns should be expected.

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[123]Heh-hsiang Yuan, "East-West Comparative Literature: An Inquiry into Possibilities," in John J. Deeney, ed., Chinese-Western Comparative Literature Theory and Strategy, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1980, p.1.

[124]Fokkema, "New Strategies," p.1.

2.7 CONCLUSIONS

The most preferable method of interpretating the database established in Chapter i of this study remains somewhere between the poles of the intrinsic and extrinsic approaches. During the 20th century Western critics have increasingly advocated an intrinsic study of literature. Chinese critics, working under the demands of the Marxist-Maoist literary line, and a number of Western observers of contemporary Chinese literature, have upheld the extrinsic study of literature. Goldman's aforementioned advocation of a "synthesis" of the intrinsic and extrinsic approaches is far from a compromise. It is an approach which is advocated, to a certain extent, by the burgeoning movement of New Historicism. The sociopolitical context in contemporary China has, for the most part, dictated the form literature should take, the developments it should make, the viewpoint it should propagate, the themes it should describe and even the language it should use. It would be wrong to reject the extrinsic viewpoint out of hand. Nevertheless, all literary works are subject to the codes and devices which govern literary creation. All works of fiction are created from a set of raw materials and fashioned by an author into a publishable work accessible to an audience. It would also be wrong to reject the intrinsic viewpoint out of hand.

The fiction in the database will therefore be scrutinized against the sociopolitical context in which it was created, primarily through the means by which the author expresses the context in his or her work, and also as individual literary texts within which may be found a number of purely literary devices. The inseparable bonds between literature and politics in

post-Mao China suggest that the author's arrangement of these devices may result from ideological rather than aesthetic factors. The short stories will therefore be analysed from a number of standpoints: (a) presentation of the story, that is, the themes, subject matter and methods of characterization which constitute their "raw material"; (b) stylistics, that is, a study of the language and imagery, both of which are governed by socio-political as well as literary codes; (c) narrative structure, that is, the method of ordering the plot by the author; and (d) the authorial voices and narrative modes which govern the story's impartation to the reader. Such a broad-based interpretation of the database is necessary in order to achieve a more representative view of the short stories published during 1979. The standpoints delineated above will be placed both in the context of 20th century Chinese fiction as a whole, and also in their distinct manifestations in the short stories of 1979. Furthermore, throughout the study differences and similarities between official and nonofficial fiction will continue to be highlighted.

Chapter Three: Presentation of the Story: Theme, Subject Matter and Characterization

3.1 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Before analysing the short stories under review in the light of their theme, subject matter and characterization, it is first necessary to define a number of terms. While story may be defined as the narrative recounting of a series of events, it is more accurately perceived as the abstract "raw materials" which, when reconstructed, form the finished arrangement of the plot.[1] In explaining what actually happens, the story embodies the subject matter of a literary work. In determining to whom the events happen, the story brings into play the concept of character. The existence of character is established at this basic level, as a contemporary Chinese definition of the literary character (renwu) points out: the character is "one of the most important factors" in and the "principal integral component" of a literary work.[2]

The theme of a literary work is also established at the story level. Theme is the fundamental thought within a literary work and usually represents a salient abstract idea which emerges from that work's treatment of its subject matter.[3] Whereas the subject matter more closely points to

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[1]Baldick, p.211.
[2]Cihai (1989), p.343.
[3]Abrams, p.121.

the events within a work, its theme constitutes a more general concept. According to the Chinese definition, however, theme (zhuti) should not be viewed as a "nakedly abstract thought," for it is closely bound to the specific characteristics of the subject matter within a literary work.[4] Owing to the creative differences which exist between writers, similar subject matter may sometimes express different themes.

Theme and subject matter refer to the content of a fictional work. Character refers to the people who inhabit that work. Although these concepts are all an integral part of the basic "raw materials" of a fictional work, they are more clearly analysed separately. A broad statistical analysis of the distribution of themes and subject matter over the 148 short stories in the database indicates that certain thematic and subject areas recur more commonly than others. A more accurate picture of the content pursued by short-storywriters in 1979 should emerge through analysis of the recurrent themes and subject matter. At this stage the discussion will be necessarily limited to plot analysis and the reasons behind selection of subject matter. The ground should then have been prepared to allow an analysis of the methods of characterization utilized in the short stories.

3.2 THE SEQUELAE OF RECENT HISTORY

More than one third of the short stories under review (54 of a total 148 [36%]: 26 of 85 [30%] for Renmin wenxue; 23 of 51 [45%] for Zuopin; 5 of 12 [42%] for Jintian) deal with the effects of recent history on individuals

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[4]Cihai (1989), p.1354.

and society. Society's preoccupation with the Cultural Revolution and its legacy clearly continued to influence literary subject matter during 1979.

"Literature of the scars" began the official literary denunciation of the villainy of the Gang of Four. Reading fictionalized accounts of the tragedies of individual lives which, for the most part, mirrored reality, set in motion a process of catharsis.[5] The profundity of psychological scarring perpetrated against the Chinese nation by the Chinese nation was such that the cathartic process was extremely protracted. In many respects, "literature of the scars" appeared only as an initial heart-rending cry of a nation newly extricated from profound pain and anguish.[6] That so many writers continued to explore the sequelae of the Cultural Revolution in short stories during 1979 indicates that the readership was still undergoing the lengthy cathartic process.

Anne Thurston has described the Cultural Revolution as an "extreme situation".[7] Paralleling the psychological trauma visited upon the Chinese nation with that of the survivors of Nazi concentration camps, Thurston defines an "extreme situation" as a disaster coupled with a holocaust, i.e. a deliberate and systematic act of genocide.

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[5]Catharsis generally refers to the arousal of the reader's emotions and their eventual purgation while assimilating the tragic plight of an identifiable protagonist. In this respect, fiction is cathartic first and foremost for the reader. However, is writing a form of catharsis for the writer? A.K. Abdulla dismisses this by saying: "it is in this particular application that catharsis is most abused," and continues that although a writer may work from an emotional need, he/she is rarely healed in the cathartic process. Catharsis in Literature, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985, p.47.

[6]Duke, Blooming and Contending, p.63.

[7]Anne Thurston, "Victims of China's Cultural Revolution: The Invisible Wounds," Pacific Affairs, LVII:4 (Winter 1984-5), p.599.

Although parallels between Cultural Revolution China and Nazi Germany may exist on certain levels, the comparison should not be taken to the extreme. Both were suppressive regimes which exerted political control and physical torment on a large number of innocent victims. In both cases these victims were forced into inhuman incarceration without any recourse to justice. More importantly, however, the after-effects of the regimes on the Chinese and German societies were devastating in similar ways. Both societies were marked by psychological ruination, which in turn was tempered by feelings of loss (of culture, of spiritual respect, of hopes and ideals) and isolation (brought about by solitary confinement and sensory deprivation).[8]

Chinese critics writing in the PRC and in the West have continued to draw parallels between post-Cultural Revolution China and post-War Germany. In a study published in German, Qiu-Hua Hu has demonstrated that similarities in theme and substance exist between Chinese "literature of the scars" and German "ruins literature" (Trümmerliteratur).[9] These similarities mirror the similar spiritual recovery each society was striving to make once their respective "catastrophe" had ended. Following a visit to Germany in 1985, the controversial writer Liu Binyan still saw value in paralleling Nazi Germany with Cultural Revolution China.[10]

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[8]Thurston, pp.605-7.

[9]Qiu-Hua Hu, Literatur nach der Katastrophe, Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1991, passim. For more on German "ruins literature" and its possible influence on post-Mao writers see Chapter iv (4.5.3) of this study.

[10]Liu Binyan, "Tamen buneng wangji" (They Cannot Forget), Baogao wenxue (Reportage), January 1986.

Typical results of an "extreme situation" such as the Cultural Revolution include the extent of loss, the depth of isolation and the meaninglessness of suffering which blighted Chinese society in the late 1970s. The symptoms of neurasthenia and depression exhibited by those traumatized by the Cultural Revolution are perhaps the most visible sequelae of an "extreme situation".

A number of the patients suffering from neurasthenia and clinical depression as interviewed by Arthur Kleinman in the early 1980s continue to blame the Cultural Revolution for their psychological trauma. Kleinman concurs with this viewpoint by stating that none of the other large-scale sources of social chaos in twentieth-century China "has had a more disastrous effect on individual experience than the Cultural Revolution."[11] One of Kleinman's patients emphasizes the need to speak out on behalf of the Cultural Revolution's psychological casualties by looking back on that period of recent history:

> [O]nly at the end of the terrible ascent, as a survivor, can one afford to experience the pain of what one has been through: the losses, the fearsome threats to self and family, the undermining of social ideology, cultural tradition and personal dreams, the bitter alienation and desperate sense of injustice, the hopelessness of it all.[12]

A number of the short stories in the database look back on traumatic episodes during the Cultural Revolution. As Kleinman has argued, the

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[11]Arthur Kleinman, Social Origins of Distress and Disease: Depression, Neurasthenia and Pain in Modern China, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986, p.123. Kleinman continues by qualifying his statement in the following terms: "I am not trying to suggest that what happened to Chinese in the Cultural Revolution is without precedent or cannot be compared to social sources of misery in other societies" (p.130).

[12]Kleinman, p.141.

extent of the depressive experience of survivors of the Cultural Revolution may have distorted their memory of that period and exaggerated the degree of their suffering.[13] In fictionalizing similarly traumatic experiences, writers are perhaps also guilty of a certain exaggeration in their stories.

For those young people whose education was disrupted by the Cultural Revolution, the bitter factional struggles which broke out between opposing groups of Red Guards during 1967 amounted to a traumatic episode. These events became a recurrent - and controversial - theme for fiction during 1979. A number of stories forcefully examined the deleterious effect of the struggles on those young people caught up in mass politicization.

In Yang Ganhua's "Shuxue" (Blood Transfusion), for example, the young daughter of a commune director injured in the Red Guard clashes commits suicide on realizing that the donor of the blood with which she has been transfused is not only a member of the opposing Red Guard faction but also the great-grandson of a landlord.[14] The irony of the story only comes to light after the young girl's death. The donor is in fact the son of a revolutionary entrusted to the landlord's family as a child. The similarly themed "Xueran de zaochen" (Blood-dyed Morning) by Lü Lei is marked by an even more bitter irony.[15] A young man, acting as an executioner for one Red Guard faction, shoots and kills a member of the opposing faction who turns out to be his younger brother. Prior to this, the younger

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[13]Kleinman, p.141.
[14]Zuopin, December 1979, pp.5-9.
[15]Zuopin, May 1979, pp.3-9.

brother, separated from his family for several months, has spent the entire course of the narrative searching desperately for his brother.

A wider debate on fictional depiction of the Red Guard struggles erupted in the early spring of 1979 resulting from two short stories which appeared in publications emanating from Shanghai. "Feng" (Maples) by Zheng Yi and "Chongfeng" (Re-encounter) by Jin He were both designed to vindicate the Red Guards from official designation as "criminals" and to affirm that these young people had acted out of naivety and zeal.[16] Although initially criticized as "adopting an attitude of appeasement, forgiveness and even eulogy towards assailants of the violent struggles,"[17] these two stories elicited a large number of letters from supportive readers. Moreover, both authors had personal experience of the Red Guard struggles. Zheng Yi, for example, later wrote that for the whole of his period of rustication in a Shanxi coal-mining community, he had harboured the intention of writing a story based on his observations as a Red Guard.[18] Despite the controversy it created, "Re-encounter", which tells of a former Red Guard who killed a member of the opposing faction in order to save the life of the cadre who now interrogates him, was officially placed in 19th position of the twenty-five best short stories of 1979. The popularity of "Maples", in which a young man is executed for his implication in the accidental death of his former girlfriend and factional opponent, was not officially encouraged. A cartoon version of the story published in August 1979 was initially banned

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[16]These two short stories were published respectively in Wenhui bao (Wenhui Gazette), 11 February 1979, and Shanghai wenxue, April 1979.

[17]Bao Chengji, "Dui 'Feng' de yiyi" (Objections to 'Maples'), Shanghai wenxue, June 1979.

[18]Zheng Yi, "Tantan wode xizuo 'Feng'" (Talking about My Exercise in Composition: 'Maples'), Wenhui bao, 6 September 1979.

due to its violence, and a film version made in 1980 was itself subject to criticism.[19]

The rustication of many ex-Red Guards which began in early 1969 was another traumatic episode which provided recurrent subject matter for fiction. Settlement in the countryside was promoted as a test of political dedication and as a contribution to China's economic construction. Initial optimism was, however, soon replaced by horror that such backward conditions could still exist after more than two decades of socialism. The young people felt trapped in a lifetime of hard work and betrayed by the system for which they had fought. These sentiments were especially felt by those young people who, because of problematic backgrounds or no official connections, were expected to spend the remainder of their lives in the countryside. Those short stories in the database concerning rustication all depict main characters in this predicament.

In "Haohao dajiang liu" (The Mighty River Flows) by Lü Lei a young cadre is dispatched to a rural community to investigate the rusticated Miao Fang whose parents died in prison in the early stages of the Cultural Revolution.[20] Despite official designation of her as "obstinate" and "unrepentant", Miao Fang gradually reveals her altruistic nature to the young cadre through a series of selfless acts.

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[19]The cartoon version of "Maples," drawn by three Shanghainese illustrators working in Harbin, made explicit the link between the Red Guard fatalities and their loyalty to Mao. It was allegedly only after the intervention of Hu Yaobang that the ban on the cartoon story was lifted. The film was made by the Emei studios in Sichuan. It was initially denounced as the documentary footage it included showed both Lin Biao and Jiang Qing flanking Mao. (Link, Stubborn Weeds, p.57.)

[20]Zuopin, August 1979, pp.13-22.

The most renowned short story of 1979 on rustication appeared in Zuopin in early spring. Popularity for and criticism of Kong Jiesheng's "Zai xiaohe nabian" (On the Other Side of the Stream) resulted not from its portrayal of rustication, but from its implied theme of incest.[21] The plot concerning a rusticated youth's sexual union with his long-lost sister is eventually removed from the realm of incest when the sister is found to be a peasant child fostered by the family since birth. Nevertheless, one Chinese critic compares the story's subject matter to Guy de Maupassant's short story "Le Port" (1887), in which a sailor sleeps with a Marseille prostitute who happens to be his estranged sister. The critic continues to contest that Kong Jiesheng has merely "grafted" (yihua jiemu) Maupassant's tragedy onto a contemporary Chinese setting.[22] The theme of incest may have been seized upon by critics, but the story seriously explores the malaise which beset rusticated youth.

"On the Other Side of the Stream" is a sensationalized melodrama, yet the important picture it paints is still evident in its plot. The effect of rustication on urban youth is clearly harmful: both brother and sister are cynical towards the political situation and sceptical about ever leaving the rural sector. The sexual union they share attests to the necessary collective bonding which Anne Thurston has described as essential for survival in "extreme situations".[23] The story also proved too controversial for the authorities to be seen recommending it by awarding a prize - even

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[21]Zuopin, March 1979, pp.31-42.

[22]Yang Jian, "Ping Zuopin fabiao de liangpian xiaoshuo" (On Two Stories Published by Zuopin), Meijiang wenyi (Meijiang Literature and Art), 2 (1979).

[23]Thurston, p.617.

though it had been placed third in the national reader preference poll for 1979.[24] Nevertheless, the story, together with Chen Guokai's "Wo yinggai zenme ban?" (What Should I Do?), which depicted a personal tragedy from the Cultural Revolution and was originally based on the contents of a wall-poster, greatly increased readership demand for Zuopin.[25]

Tian Ran's "Juhui" (The Get-Together), which was carried by Jintian, provides a diagnostic analysis of rustication.[26] Through the progressive deterioration of a rusticated student named Qiu Xia, the despair of those young people "stranded" in the countryside is explored. Qiu organizes a get-together of fellow rusticated youths in order to promote a sense of social support, yet the gathering soon deteriorates as the youngsters drink to excess in order to dispel depression.

The only moment of happiness in Qiu's otherwise painful existence is the concern shown to her by an old shepherd, fearful that she will fall into the reservoir above which she often sits and reads:

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[24]Link, Roses and Thorns, p.169. Link points out that the authorities were willing to recognize the talents of Kong Jiesheng, and therefore singled out one of his less controversial short stories for a prize. "Yinwei youle ta" (Because She Was There), Renmin wenxue, October 1979, pp.44-52 combines the more pedestrian themes of love and modernization. Although readers were invited to vote for those stories which they had enjoyed reading, the selection committee, which was composed of aged writers and cultural politicians, awarded prizes according to the politics of the writer and the text. As Rudolf G. Wagner writes: "perhaps it is appropriate to say that for this year inclusion in the top list depended mostly on popular vote, while the place within the list depended mostly on political criteria..." Inside a Service Trade, pp.437-8.

[25]Zuopin, February 1979, pp.37-50.

[26]Jintian, 6 (December 1979), pp.63-70, 75. Tian Ran is the pseudonym of Gan Tiesheng (b.1946), and it is under this name that the story was published in a revised version in Beijing wenyi (Beijing Literature and Art), February 1979.

> Then it suddenly dawned on me, he was afraid I would jump into the reservoir! Immediately my heart surged with emotion; in this desolate autumn, somebody who had nothing to do with me was actually concerned for me...[27]

Qiu's revelation brings hope into the tormented existence of the youths, and emphasizes that human essence and worth still exist in the society which has so contorted their lives.

Where "The Get-Together" differs from those stories on rustication published in the official press is in its conclusion. "The Mighty River Flows" concludes with the young cadre returning to Miao Fang's side after three years at university in order to spend the remainder of his life with her. "On the Other Side of the Stream" concludes in 1979 with the two main characters, now vindicated from the incestuous relationship which hung over them, rejecting cynicism and working conscientiously towards modernization. "The Get-Together", published in a journal which did not require the addition of a pat "bright tail" (guangming weiba) at the end of every story, concludes in hopelessness. Unable to seek contentment in her own existence or with the empathetic concern of her contemporaries, a disillusioned Qiu Xia views death as the only release from an existence of unbearable pain. She kills herself by jumping into the reservoir and drowning. Qiu's suicide contains facets of both "suicide of flight" (i.e. extrication from a situation deemed intolerable) and "suicide of grief" (i.e. loss of some central element of one's life).[28]

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[27]Jintian, 6 (December 1979), p.67.

[28]Jean Baechler, Suicide, New York, 1979; quoted in Thurston, p.618. Thurston continues: "The ultimate reasons leading one person in adversity to choose suicide and another to choose survival lie deep in the individual psyche. But the depth of loss suffered by many victims of the Cultural Revolution robbed many of what had given meaning to their lives. Grief over what had been lost and the need to escape an intolerable situation

Several of the short stories portray cadres who reflect dolefully on the suffering visited on others due to their own inaction during the Cultural Revolution. These cadres are not, however, depicted as wicked lackeys of the Gang of Four, but as weak individuals succumbing to overwhelming pressures.[29] In Yu Long's "Ta shuyu nayilei ren?" (What Sort of Person Is He?) Yuan Ping, the deputy director of a district revolutionary committee, is severely reprimanded in the post-Mao period for his involvement in the maltreatment (and eventual death) of a teacher.[30] Yuan's recalling of the past shows him to be no more than a yesman, afraid of expressing his own opinions which, under the circumstances, would have saved the teacher's life. What sort of cadre is Yuan Ping? Was he won over by the Gang of Four to carry out evil deeds, or did he fail to sell out to the Gang but kept up appearances for it? Yu Long fails to provide an easy answer to the questions he poses. Similarly, propaganda cadre Qin Muping in Zhang Xian's "Jiyi" (Memory) searches his guilt-ridden memories to discover how his inaction led to the persecution of a young projectionist.[31]

A greater number of the stories reflect individual suffering as a direct result of the Cultural Revolution. In Zhuang Dongxian's "Huannan zhizhong" (In Adversity) two sisters are left to fend for themselves following the death of their mother and the imprisonment of their father in the early years of the Cultural Revolution.[32] "Wuyan'ge" (A Song Without Words) by Ai Mingzhi depicts a young girl, assuming the guise of a man,

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must often have combined as motives for ending one's life, particularly when individuals had lost the support and solace of their families as well."

[29]Jenner, p.284.

[30]Zuopin, April 1979, pp.28-35.

[31]Renmin wenxue, March 1979, pp.13-19.

[32]Zuopin, June 1979, pp.10-14.

who is left without a family following her father's death in the Korean War and her mother's death at the hands of Red Guards.[33] In Wan Jie's "Nanyou" (Fellow Sufferer) a lecturer sympathizes with the bitterness expressed by a young art student who is eventually beaten to death for accidentally spilling paint onto a newspaper photo of Mao.[34] The most interesting point in Wan's story is the wording he selects for his main character's despair at the Gang of Four's trampling of China's young: "Save the children. Save the future of our country." This choice of wording is remarkably similar to that of the teacher in Liu Xinwu's "Banzhuren" (The Class Teacher, 1977), which in turn harks back to Lu Xun's "Kuangren riji" (Diary of a Madman, 1918).[35]

Stories in the nonofficial journals also explore the sequelae of recent history. Lanlan, the main character in Shi Mo's "Guilaide moshengren" (The Homecoming Stranger), has experienced a life of coercion and tears.[36] Through Lanlan's first-person musings the author examines the suffering of a "wounded generation", the cynicism of the narrative perspective suggesting the injury and isolation which marked that suffering.[37] The most important factor in Lanlan's formative process occurred when she was

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[33]Renmin wenxue, December 1979, pp.21-29.

[34]Zuopin, July 1979, pp.18-22.

[35]Lu Xun's actual wording from 1918 was "Save the children!" (jiujiu haizi). In 1977 Liu Xinwu wrote "Save the children entrapped by the Gang of Four!" (jiujiu bei 'sirenbang' kenghaide haizi). The actual wording in Wan Jie's story is "Save the children. Save the future of our country." (jiujiu haizi, jiujiu women guojia de weilai). Readers of the latter two stories would immediately make the connection with Lu Xun's "Diary of a Madman", which has always been officially acclaimed as the first work of modern Chinese literature.

[36]Jintian, 2 (26 February 1979), pp.21-31. Shi Mo is one of the pseudonyms used by Zhao Zhenkai, who achieved fame as the poet Bai Dao.

[37]Wolfgang Kubin, Die Jagd nach dem Tiger, Bochum: Brockmeyer, 1984, pp.169-170.

twelve years old. From an early age she had been taught to despise her father who was exiled as a Rightist in 1957. During the Cultural Revolution, however, her mother inadvertently claimed that the father had been wronged. When an innocent Lanlan broadcast her father's innocence, the authorities devised a suitable punishment: she was publicly denounced and forced to kneel on broken glass until she recanted. This one incident during Lanlan's youth marks her maturation from the naivety of childhood to realization of the brutality of adulthood.

Brutalization during the Cultural Revolution has resulted in a number of mental and physical sequelae inflicting the characters of these stories. Lanlan, for example, has developed a hardened exterior which veils her internalization of complex feelings. In other characters the trauma is more apparent. While some main characters feign dumbness as a result of the brutality they experienced during the Cultural Revolution,[38] others have gone completely insane. Yuan Jiexia, the eponymous heroine of Yang Wenzhi's "Feng guniang" (The Crazy Girl),[39] has gone insane after rejecting the love of a man who supported her despite persecution during the Cultural Revolution and who sacrificed his own life to save hers. The narrator in "Ailü" (The Lovers) by Wang Yugu encounters a young dancer who has been rendered insane following denunciation by Red Guards.[40]

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[38]In Li Lu's "Yaba guniang" (The Dumb Girl), Jintian 2 (26 February 1979), pp.43-51, Guizi becomes dumb following the persecution and death of her father. In Hua Shi's "Haoyu zhi shijie" (A Welcome Rain), Renmin wenxue, November 1979, pp.62-69, an elderly forest-keeper becomes dumb when he is falsely accused of sabotaging the revolution.

[39]Zuopin, September 1979, pp.7-17.

[40]Zuopin, October 1979, pp.40-46.

3.3 INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS

A little over two-fifths of the short stories in the database (32 of a total 148 [22%]: 16 of 85 [19%] for Renmin wenxue; 10 of 51 [20%] for Zuopin; 6 of 12 [50%] for Jintian) deal with interpersonal relations, i.e. the quest for friendship and love, and also the antagonisms arising from the failure of this quest. The pursuit of interpersonal relations was an important stage in the bringing about of a "new order" in the Chinese sociopolitical and psychological condition following the Cultural Revolution. It was also an important theme in the fiction of 1979, especially in stories concerning love and marriage. Kam Louie has written that the theme of love was a "pervasive feature" of Chinese creative writing in the late 1970s.[41] Short stories focusing on love, which first appeared in 1978 as part of "literature of the scars",[42] were predominantly concerned with redefining love according to the norms of the "new" society. Writers tended to convey similar didactic messages as to the right kind of love. The appearance of many love stories may also indicate a more liberal and individualistic trend in literature.[43] Whatever the political message propagated through stories

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[41]Kam Louie, "Love Stories: The Meaning of Love and Marriage in China, 1978-1981," Between Fact and Fiction: Essays on Post-Mao Chinese Literature and Society, Broadway, NSW: Wild Peony, 1989, p.49.

[42]Guan Gengyin, "'Buchenxin' de jiefu" (An 'Unsatisfactory' Brother-in-Law), Yalujiang, July 1978, in which a father disapproves of his daughter's fiancé until he turns out to be the son of his comrade-in-arms; Kong Jiesheng, "Yinyuan" (Marriage), Zuopin, August 1978, in which a Youth League secretary in a lock factory falls in love with and marries an overseas Chinese even though this may affect her high political standing; Da Li, "Shiqule de aiqing" (Lost Love), Yalujiang, December 1978, in which a young woman gives up the man she really loves when he is denounced during the Cultural Revolution.

[43]Louie, "Love Stories," p.49.

primarily dealing with love, by 1979 the first anthology of love stories since the Cultural Revolution was published in Shanghai.[44]

The concept of falling in love due to a shared commitment to socialism has always been standard in PRC literature.[45] Many of the love stories published in 1979 continue this theme by emphasizing that love results from friendship and solidarity, and also from working hard for the Four Modernizations. Friendship and solidarity have seemingly replaced individual emotional love, for in the ideology of socialist revolutionary love, economic considerations have a higher priority than love.[46]

In Zhou Xigao's "'Chen laodun' he tade duixiang" ('Old Squatty Chen' and His Girlfriend), for instance, the eponymous hero meets his future wife while working on a new boring machine at an iron ore mine.[47] Similarly in "Jiebai de shuilianhua" (The Pure White Water Lily) by Cong Weixi a young girl falls in love with a technician who successfully pioneers a drilling machine.[48] Kam Louie has pointed to the overtly sexist nature of such stories. The man is always depicted as the "model lover" working towards the socialist cause and the woman as giving him moral support by doing his washing and cooking.[49] This probably results from most early love stories being the work of male authors. Indeed "The Pure White Water Lily"

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[44]Aiqing xiaoshuo ji (Collected Love Stories), Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 1979.

[45]Louie, "Love Stories," p.52.

[46]Susanne Posborg, "The Concept of Love as Portrayed in Some Short Stories from 1979," in Helmut Martin, ed., Cologne-Workshop 1984 on Contemporary Chinese Literature, Köln: Deutsche Welle, 1986, p.308.

[47]Renmin wenxue, January 1979, pp.89-94.

[48]Renmin wenxue, February 1979, pp.97-106.

[49]Louie, "Love Stories," p.54.

concludes with the young girl braving the rain to take an overcoat to her boyfriend as he continues working. However, in "Yechangchang" (The Night is Long) by Li Chunguang a puritanical female technician reveals an inner strength by rejecting love and working all out for the Four Modernizations.[50]

A number of short stories depict main characters, predominantly female, who are faced with a choice of suitor. These characters also find themselves under pressure from a more traditional source - that of a mother ensuring the marriage of her daughter. Three decades after the promulgation of the New Marriage Law (May 1950) many mothers, particularly in rural areas, often took it upon themselves to arrange marriages for their daughters.

In "Xiang duixiang" (Looking over a Boyfriend) by Wang Anyou, Yang Guihua falls in love with and becomes engaged to a young man whom her family initially dislike.[51] Despite protesting that she is too interested in agricultural modernization to fall in love, Guihua eventually accedes to her parents' wishes and travels to the neighbouring village to meet the boyfriend arranged for her. It is en route to the village that Guihua encounters the technician with whom she gradually falls in love. The conclusion of the story is typically trite: the relationship is seen as successful due to the couple's joint effort for agricultural modernization. The plot of Peng Xiong's "Honghua xipan de xiju" (Comedy in the Banks of Red Flower Stream) follows similar lines.[52] Pan Yutao, worker in a

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[50]Renmin wenxue, August 1979, pp.58-62, 112.
[51]Renmin wenxue, March 1979, pp.81-89, 37.
[52]Zuopin, September 1979, pp.28-38.

machinery plant, rejects the technician chosen for her by her parents. She is in love with a fellow worker whose dedication to modernization (and knowledge of pig feed) eventually win over her parents.

How is a young girl expected to exercise her judgement when faced by a choice of suitors? The view propagated by a number of short stories in the official journals dictates that an acceptable suitor is one who is dedicated to his work, rather than one who is physically and spiritually appealing. In "Xuanze" (The Choice) by Zou Yuezhao and Xiong Cheng a young worker, Lin Xiaojuan, grows tired of her boyfriend, who is hard-working yet staid, and begins to fall for another colleague who impresses her with his apparent diligence.[53] It eventually transpires that the new boyfriend has been secretly swapping his substandard products with the old boyfriend's products, and Xiaojuan is once again forced into a change of heart. "Ai de tianping" (The Scales of Love) by Chen Jinhong develops this premise further.[54] Young technician Li Xiujian rejects the marriage proposal of Liu Jiecheng, whom she claims has become boring, because she has become infatuated with the overseas Chinese Zhang Wei. With his predilection for foreign popular music, drunken parties and "coarse" (xialiu) friends, Zhang's lifestyle begins to trouble Xiujian. When it transpires that Zhang has been sleeping around, Xiujian realizes how immoral he actually is, and decides to accept Liu's offer of marriage.

Despite the search for a new definition of love, and the publication of a number of stories depicting the "emotional" element of love, the view

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[53]Zuopin, February 1979, pp.51-56.
[54]Zuopin, November 1979, pp.14-23.

portrayed in many of the short stories in 1979 was that love cannot be depicted in terms of a sexual relationship.[55] In the official journals any erotic love was dismissed as immoral.[56] The sexual activity of Zhang Wei in "The Scales of Love" is clearly associated with wider anti-social behaviour. In another example, "Fu Chunhua" (Fu Chunhua) by Guo Minxin, a young girl moves in with her prospective parents-in-law when her fiancé attends university.[57] Four years later, despite being rejected by her fiancé, the young girl continues to care for his parents in order to help them "enjoy the new, happy socialist life". The fiancé eventually returns with his new girlfriend, who is horrified to discover - as are his own parents - that he has slept with her while being engaged to another. A similar deterioration in morality has befallen the former boyfriend of Chen Pingping in Cui Yan's "Lukou" (Intersection), which was published in Jintian.[58] Instead of totally rejecting her boyfriend, whose proclivity towards associating with prostitutes and involving himself in street brawls is viewed as a result of the Cultural Revolution, Pingping asks herself whether she still loves him. The main difference here is that the main character - and her creator - look beyond the personification of immorality to the psycho-social causes of that immorality. In Jintian the depiction of love did not need to be portrayed in such black and white terms.

While many of the short stories in Renmin wenxue and Zuopin concerning interpersonal relationships deal with love as the major theme, the short

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[55]See for example Zhang Kangkang, "Ai de quanli" (The Right to Love), Shouhuo (Harvest), 2 (September) 1979.
[56]Posborg, p.306.
[57]Zuopin, July 1979, pp.23-32.
[58]Jintian, 2 (26 February 1979), pp.33-38.

stories in Jintian tend to depict the lack of communication both between and within individuals, and the achievement of communication resulting from adverse external circumstances. Disappointed by the falsity which had marked the society of their adolescence, the contributors to Jintian turned to "a new pursuit of sincerity and nobility" in their fiction.[59] This may explain why half the short stories carried by Jintian during 1979 explore the theme of relationships.

"Yuanhao" (French Horn) by Yi Shu is one of the few short stories published in Jintian in 1979 to deal with the theme of love.[60] On reading this account of a sexual encounter between two virtual strangers in a Beijing park at night, the reader may well remain doubtful whether this is, in fact, a story about love. Writing on the love story in contemporary China, Susanne Posborg states that "French Horn" focuses on the "sexual aspect" of love, indicating that sexuality is a means of emotional expression.[61] Anne Wedell-Wedellsborg disagrees with this view by stating clearly that "French Horn" is not a love story, but a "story of repression, and the dichotomy of mind and body."[62] The narrator's interior monologue emphasizes the lack of affection and closeness he feels towards his lover. It might be more accurate to describe "French Horn" as a story which deals with the failure of communication between individuals. The lack of communication in the story is present on two levels. On the one hand, there is no sense of intimacy between the narrator and his partner. He is only able to relate comfortably to her as a white marble statue. Thinking of

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[59]Pan Yuan and Pan Jie, p.210.
[60]Jintian, 5 (September 1979), pp.49-53.
[61]Posborg, p.319.
[62]Wedell-Wedellsborg, "Chinese Modernism?" p.116.

her as a living, sensual being would give rise to a sexual desire which his intellect could not control. On the other hand, he has failed to breach the wall between the separate sexual and intellectual capacities of his psyche. The sexual act, committed under the cover of darkness, and with a woman whose face he cannot recognize, therefore fails both to vent his repressed desires or to increase his self-respect.

The woman, depicted as she is through the first-person narration of her partner, is described as an object of sensuality and sexuality intent on luring him into committing the sexual act. Through the scant dialogue she utters, however, her language conveys a sense of romantic poetry. For her the consummation of their relationship is perhaps much more an expression of love than mere physical gratification.

The attempt to achieve communication between individuals in adversity is a recurrent theme in the short stories in Jintian. This communication is not necessarily indicative of sexual attraction. Wan Zhi's "Xueyu jiaojia zhijian" (In the Mingling Snow and Rain), for example, portrays the achievement of mutual trust between independent souls.[63] The narrator, a young man, encounters a girl at a bus-stop on a rainy night in autumn. The two silent souls wait in darkness for a bus. As sleet falls, the man wants to share his umbrella with the girl. An overwhelming sense of distrust prevents the girl from immediately accepting the offer. Eventually she is persuaded to share the umbrella and a tacit understanding is seen to emerge. She then reciprocates his offer of shelter by giving him a lift in a colleague's truck.

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[63]Jintian, 4 (30 June 1979), pp.74-76.

The darkness of the night and the severity of the weather exacerbate the adverse conditions within which communication can be achieved.

A similar forging of friendship against the background of adverse weather conditions can be found in a short story carried by Renmin wenxue. Despite falling out and fighting over a young artist with whom they have both become infatuated while their ship is in dry dock at Osaka, the two eponymous sailors in Fan Tiesheng's "Aza yu Hali" (Aza and Hali) eventually save each other's lives during a typhoon.[64] The fact that both men are sailors, and therefore "brothers", means more to them than the reasons for their quarrelling.

3.4 CONTEMPORARY SOCIOPOLITICS

Contemporary sociopolitics also provided a recurrent theme in the short stories under review (32 of a total 148 [22%]: 19 of 85 [22%] for Renmin wenxue; 12 of 51 [24%] for Zuopin; 1 of 12 [8%] for Jintian). In the late 1970s the stories most popular among the readership were those exposing and examining the nation's contemporary social malaise.[65] Exposure tended to focus on the corruptibility of cadres and the inability of the bureaucratic structure to reform itself in line with contemporary policy. The exposure stories published in Renmin wenxue and Zuopin failed to appear in any great numbers until the autumn of 1979, when the official literary line had apparently quashed any opposition to the new "openness".

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[64]Renmin wenxue, April 1979, pp.70-82, 93.

[65]Link, "Fiction and the Reading Public," p.235. As Link's observations are based on data from libraries and bookshops, they do not take into account any stories from the nonofficial press.

In March 1979 the recently rehabilitated writer Liu Binyan declared it essential that literary works accurately reflect the veracity of contemporary society. Liu spoke out against literature which avoided the conflicts of everyday life, for such literature could only paint a false picture of reality. He maintained that a writer should "deeply penetrate" (shenru) life in order to expose those problems preventing social advance and praise those promoting social advance.[66] Hong Kong critic Bi Hua has written of a new literary "school" (liupai) emerging in the latter half of 1979 which propagated Liu Binyan's views on "intervention in life" (ganyu shenghuo) and exposure of the "dark side" of contemporary society.[67] Although it is doubtful that this trend can be referred to as a "school", there was certainly an increase in literary works in the autumn of 1979 which turned their gaze towards contemporary society.

Despite disapproval in certain circles, readers grew more enthusiastic towards fiction which "intervened in life". Official criticism of the conservative diatribes against "exposure literature" (especially those by Huang Ansi and Li Jian) went some way to assuring writers that there was nothing wrong in pointing out some of the problems in socialist society. Evidence from the database also proves that by the autumn of 1979 writers were beginning to focus on the problems of contemporary (i.e. post-1976)

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[66]Liu Binyan, "Guanyu 'xie yin'anmian' he 'ganyu shenghuo'" (On 'Writing about the Dark Side' and 'Intervention in Life'), Shanghai wenxue, March 1979, pp.49-57. Liu had introduced the slogan "intervention in life" (ganyu shenghuo) to the Chinese readership through translation of an address given in Beijing in 1954 by Soviet essayist Valentin Ovechkin. In 1956 he was the first Chinese writer to bear this slogan in mind when creating his own works.

[67]Bi Hua, Zhongguo xinxieshi zhuyi wenyi lungao (A Draft Discussion of China's New Realist Works of Literature and Art), Hong Kong: Dangdai wenxue yanjiu she, 1984, p.160.

society. A variety of themes were broached: corruption, improbity, bureaucratism and the special privileges mentality which permeated many middle-ranking cadres.

The most controversial fictional work to portray venality among cadres was Xu Mingxu's "Diaodong" (Transfer) which was published in Qingming in October 1979.[68] The main character, a young rusticated worker named Li Qiaolin, is able to perpetuate the corrupt system by appealing to local cadres' venality in order to be transferred to his native Shanghai. Li offers lower level cadres sumptuous meals and extravagant gifts, and even sleeps with the wife of the personnel chief to achieve his ends. The system of rulership in post-Mao China has been defined as patrimonialist, that is based on informal exchanges between patrons and clients, which are mutually profitable if unequal. The patrimonialist rulership has established a vast multi-layered pyramid of personal relationships wherein decisions and instructions, diluted and edited to serve individual needs, are filtered up and down through personal connections. Lateral movements within society, such as transfers in domicile or occupation, become dependent on individual superiors, which gives rise to opportunities for the leaders and the led to use corrupt means to secure advantage in personal relationships.[69]

Although none of the short stories published in Renmin wenxue or Zuopin depict such depths of improbity, corruptibility among officialdom is a recurrent theme. For example, in Zheng Jisi's "Xinfang" (A New House),

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[68]Qingming, 2 (October) 1979.

[69]Barrett L. McCormick, Political Reform in Post-Mao China: Democracy and Bureaucracy in a Leninist State, Berkeley: Berkeley University Press, 1990, p.20ff.

a young couple about to marry are moved to present an antique wardrobe to the daughter of the housing cadre in order to be allocated a house.[70] That their application for housing should be approved after such an act - despite seven previous attempts - points to corruptibility within the system. Similarly in "Maomingzhe" (The Impostor) by You Fengwei, a young man with the same name as the bureau chief's son has been using his name to obtain furniture for young married couples.[71] Despite the suspicions of local officialdom, the young man has not sought personal profit but is only doing what the real bureau chief's son has done for his friends. The detective investigating the case concludes that the actions of the "impostor" have exposed some dark areas of society.

A number of stories present cadres acting for their own personal gain rather than for the good of the people over whom they have influence. In "Fen fangzi" (Assigning Homes) by Shu Zhan, for instance, the director of a knitting factory has large apartments allocated to his family and small, expensive apartments allocated to his workers.[72] The eponymous hero of "Hali de gushi" (The Story of Hali) by Aikebai'er Mijiti, a Kazakh writer, is elevated in status from a shepherd to a cadre, and then spends his days fishing, hunting and drinking rather than attending to office.[73] Hali eventually receives his retribution when he is horse-whipped by his angry father.

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[70]Zuopin, December 1979, pp.40-45.
[71]Zuopin, October 1979, pp.18-25.
[72]Zuopin, March 1979, pp.43-49.
[73]Renmin wenxue, October 1979, pp.60-65.

Some other stories depict main characters frustrated by the quagmire of bureaucratism. Ji Enshou's "Yizhang tidan" (Bill of Lading) concerns a driver who is continually prevented from securing the truck promised to him.[74] When the driver eventually secures the truck, it is old and rusty, but he cannot lodge an official complaint without going through all the bureaucracy. The story concludes on a sober note: if central government has decided upon a policy of modernization and liberalization, then why do middle-ranking cadres fail to uphold this line? The old man prevented from seeking redress from a cadre in "Liu zhuren" (Director Liu) by Cheng Yi expresses similar sentiments of frustration.[75]

None of the short stories published in Jintian condemn cadre privileges or corruption in a direct manner. "Qiang" (The Wall) by Tie Bing alludes to the feeling of superiority exercised by a number of cadres, and the sense of inequality and injustice felt by the workers under their jurisdiction.[76] The narrator of the story witnesses her cousin, a judge, pronounce the death sentence on Yu Zhiqiang, the son of a factory worker with whom she used to go to school. Yu has been charged with murder, a crime which directly results from the inequality felt by Yu's "social class". While the narrator's cousin, as part of the privileged "class", is able to have built an elegant house with extravagant extras for his forthcoming marriage, Yu's brother is denied permission to build a house for himself and his bride. Yu's determination to build a house for his brother against the wishes of the neighbourhood committee results in his quarrelling with

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[74]Renmin wenxue, May 1979, pp.90-94.
[75]Renmin wenxue, August 1979, pp.25-32, 72.
[76]Jintian, 4 (June 1979), pp.17-21.

and killing a neighbour. There is clearly a breakdown in communication between the worker "class" and the cadre "class", the latter enjoying privileges of office at the expense of the former.[77] That the cadre "class" has grown out of touch with the society over which it is supposed to govern merely heightens the hypocrisy of its moral code. The stubbornness and impenitence of a member of the working "class" directed primarily againt the privileged "class" may be interpreted on another level: it is analogous to the Democracy Movement activists' direct challenge to the CCP's privileged stratum.

There were also those cadres who refused to perpetuate the privileged stratum of which they were a part. The new local secretary in Huang Fei's "Jinji tongzhi" (Urgent Message) refuses to live in the large apartment occupied by his predecessor, eats in the factory canteen and helps lay ashes on the frozen road during the night.[78] The actions of labour and capital chief Shi Zhenyu in Zhang Wu's "Chuzhang de nanchu" (The Section Chief's Difficulties) are more subtle but no less exemplary.[79] Shi resists bribes from a worker wanting his daughter transferred, and from a department chief who wants his grandson transferred to a position already promised to the son of an injured worker. The story concludes with the following plea from Shi: "How come I am able to show the masses every consideration for their hardships while they fail to understand my difficulties?"(93).

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[77]Wedell-Wedellsborg, "Chinese Modernism?" p.106.
[78]Renmin wenxue, November 1979, pp.11-13, 17.
[79]Renmin wenxue, November 1979, pp.86-93.

During 1979 the official view was propagated that although there was some corruption, Party committees were, on the whole, being run on lines which were more "democratic" (minzhu) than ever before. The blame for this corruption was still being laid, albeit erroneously, at the door of the Gang of Four. This official view was supported in June 1979 when the National People's Congress passed the new Electoral Law which "sought to demonstrate a new spirit of democracy by insisting that contests for local Party Congresses should not be unopposed" and that "any member of the electorate could stand on the nomination of only three votes."[80] There were a number of stories, published exclusively in the official journals, which generated this view.

In "Xuanju xinduiwei de shihou" (On Electing the New Team Committee) by Zhang Wu a commune team leader is to be elected by the commune members presenting a flower to their preferred candidate.[81] The municipal Party secretary in Xu Shaowu's "Jianchazhang renxuan" (Candidates for the Procurator General) has to approve a candidate for procurator general in democratic manner and without bias.[82] In "Gaixuan" (Re-election) by Shi Zhongxing, a university Party secretary has to make a choice between two candidates for committee who polled an equal number of votes: an elderly, experienced cadre or a young teacher who has in the past been critical of the interference of the committee in technological matters.[83]

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[80]Gittings, p.171.
[81]Renmin wenxue, March 1979, pp.76-80.
[82]Renmin wenxue, August 1979, pp.50-57.
[83]Renmin wenxue, October 1979, pp.18-27.

3.5 MODERNIZATION

Industrial and agricultural modernization was a popular literary theme in the official press, although it was one eschewed by the nonofficial press. At the CCP's Third Plenum in December 1978 it was officially decided to shift the focus of work from class struggle to socialist modernization and the acceleration of agricultural development. In January 1979 the CCP also issued two important documents aimed at realizing agricultural modernization. If the political sphere in 1979 concentrated on modernization, then it is only natural that, in the Chinese context, this should be reflected in the fiction of the day.

Many, if not all, of the short stories concerning modernization are closely liked to the theme of love. Many of the love stories discussed above (see 3.3) are also conspicuous in their mentioning of the perceived link between love and realization of the Four Modernizations. As such, it is often difficult to ascertain whether love or modernization is the dominant thematic concern in a work of fiction, especially if both themes are given equal weight. For example, "Yinwei youle ta" (Because She Was There) by Kong Jiesheng concerns two young lovers from a lock factory who are eager to invent a lock packaging machine but are resisted by factory bureaucrats.[84] Likewise the young couple in Huang Tianyuan's "Cili" (Magnetism) have developed a magnetic clamp, yet the factory political director is intent on stifling the plan as the couple have previously been criticized for listening to Beethoven on a foreign radio station.[85]

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[84]Renmin wenxue, October 1979, pp.44-52.
[85]Renmin wenxue, June 1979, pp.15-20.

The disinclination of cadres to support projects deemed in line with the Four Modernizations is a recurrent theme in the short stories. In "Chongtu" (Conflict) by Mo Shen, a cadre's reluctance to put aside political study in favour of supporting the drive for modernization leads to a dangerous industrial accident.[86] In "Taohua du" (Peach Blossom Creek) by Chen Xiaozhang the first democratically elected production brigade leader attempts to bring in new working methods and increase production but is stalled by criticism from local cadres.[87]

"Qiaochangzhang shangren ji" (Manager Qiao Assumes Office) by Jiang Zilong, officially acclaimed as the most popular short story of 1979, is perhaps the best known literary work on modernization.[88] It is also not without its love interest. The appointment of Qiao Guangpu as manager of an electrical machinery plant may be seen as "intervening in life" in its exposure of bureaucratic cadres and self-serving technicians, but more importantly it offers a solution in the form of the Four Modernizations. Bureaucratism is diagnosed as a sequela of the Gang of Four period and the modernization - or "reformism" - of Qiao Guangpu is the most apt cure. "Reformist literature" (gaige wenxue), as much of Jiang Zilong's early fiction was dubbed, emerged in didactic accompaniment to the demands of the Four Modernizations. Qiao Guangpu is its undisputed hero, embracing the "correct" political criteria (i.e. modernization) to solve the malpractices within his factory. Jiang's story is essentially conformist (complete with "bright tail"), but it satisfied both the bold demands of those advocating

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[86]Renmin wenxue, May 1979, pp.56-64.
[87]Renmin wenxue, October 1979, pp.69-76.
[88]Renmin wenxue, July 1979, pp.3-26.

"intervention in life" and those who sought literary works promoting optimistic social advance.[89] Whereas other writers focused on the problem of bureaucratism without providing any answers as to its eradication, "Manager Qiao Assumes Office", in its full orientation towards the Four Modernizations, "neatly deposited all the problems plaguing Chinese industry at the time before the transition around Hua Guofeng," that is the problems of the Cultural Revolution era.[90]

3.6 WAR STORIES

War fiction has always been popular in China. Of those short stories in the database about war (10 of a total 148 [7%]), four-fifths of them were published in Renmin wenxue (8 of 85 [9%]) and the remainder in Zuopin (2 of 51 [4%]). In the immediate post-Mao period so-called "military literature" (junzu wenxue) was also created to assist in the task of eradicating the influence of the Gang of Four. Moreover the literary commentator Zhang Zhong has argued:

> [E]ven though these stories continued to describe the 'battles of yesteryear' and touched upon the realities of army life, from the point of view of creativity, military fiction failed to present any major changes and therefore remained in a period of stagnation.[91]

During late 1978 and early 1979 war stories continued to fulfil a political commitment. They presented "colourful and stirring" episodes from the Anti-Japanese War (1937-45) and the Civil War between the CCP and the KMT (1946-9), eulogizing communist war heroes and at the same time

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[89]Louie, "Discussions," p.38.
[90]Wagner, pp.428-9.
[91]Zhang Zhong, p.525.

continuing to denounce the Gang of Four. For example, in Liu Ji's "Shenshan lücheng" (Route into the Deep Mountains) a military commander returns to the mountainous region where he served as a guerilla during the Anti-Japanese War.[92] In remembering a young man who had died at the hands of the Japanese, the military commander concludes that the Japanese invaders and the Gang of Four were as evil as each other: "They were a pack of rabid dogs"(98). Shao Wu and Hui Lin's "Hujiang xing" (Song of the Brave General) continues to bemoan the evils of the Gang of Four.[93] A general who was both brave and magnanamous during the Civil War is forced to work in a mine during the Cultural Revolution due to a minor political transgression in the 1940s.

China's border skirmishes with Vietnam provided the catalyst for new war stories and a more immediate need for propaganda. Chinese propaganda claims that on 17 February 1979 Chinese frontier troops fought back "in self-defence" against the Vietnamese "aggressors" who had allegedly made armed incursions into Chinese territory. After "achieving their military goals" the Chinese troops apparently withdrew from Vietnam on 16 March.[94] There is, in opposition to this "official" view, an account that the Chinese troops were forced to retreat from the border in very bad order. One of the charges levelled against the renowned Democracy Movement activist Wei Jingsheng when he was sentenced in October 1979 was that he had passed "military secrets" - i.e. revealing details about Chinese action in Vietnam -

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[92]Renmin wenxue, August 1979, pp.92-100.
[93]Renmin wenxue, January 1979, pp.26-36.
[94]Cheng Jin, pp.72-73.

to a foreign journalist.[95] Nevertheless, the positive image is propagated by a number of short stories appearing in the official journals.

The propaganda element of these new war stories tends towards glorification of the reason for the fighting - righteousness always viewed as being on the side of the Chinese. In "Meijiu xianhua" (Fine Wine and Fresh Flowers) by Xin Ruzhong and Li Chengcai the bravery of a young soldier who has been in the army for only three months is extolled.[96] The soldier pledges: "I shall certainly defeat the Vietnamese invaders and pledge with my life to protect the construction of the Four Modernizations in the Motherland..."(80). It is implicit in the story that the soldiers' participation in defeating the enemy is legitimized by their desire to protect the Four Modernizations. Similar sentiments are expressed in Wang Yaping's "Tebie xingdong" (Special Operations).[97] As the platoon is given orders to attack the enemy headquarters, the leader remarks that "an indescribable happiness" is swelling in his heart. Even short stories which view the Vietnamese conflict from the Vietnamese perspective are unrealistically pro-Chinese in outlook. "Huolu - yige Yuenan laoren de zaoyu" (Making a Living - The Lot of an Elderly Vietnamese Person) by Mo Shaoyun depicts an old woman of Chinese descent who suffers at the hands of the Vietnamese authorities for her innocent pro-Chinese activities during the border skirmishes.[98]

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[95]Gittings, p.167. Apparently the "military secrets" divulged by Wei had been published in the internal bulletin Cankao xiaoxi (Reference News).

[96]Renmin wenxue, May 1979, pp.75-80.

[97]Renmin wenxue, May 1979, pp.81-86.

[98]Zuopin, April 1979, pp.36-39.

3.7 METHODS OF CHARACTERIZATION

The opening section of this chapter pointed out that the character exists as part of the "raw materials" which form a literary work. A character cannot be separated from its setting, for this is the temporal and spatial background against which its actions emerge, and these actions in turn constitute the subject matter central to any narrative. A reciprocal relationship may be seen to exist between a character and its setting, each determining the other. The character may be viewed as a "guiding thread" untangling and arranging the elements of the "raw materials" within the story against the setting depicted.[99] Having established the kinds of setting and subject matter in which the characters within the short stories in the database exist, attention may now be focussed on the methods of creating these characters.

Much of Chinese literature from the late 1970s is "realistic". As Bernard J. Paris has argued, the primary interest of "realistic" fiction is representation, the two chief objects of representation being character and setting.[100] A 1979 Chinese definition of character similarly maintains that fiction reflects "real life" through a description of the relationship between characters and those characters' actions.[101] Characters in fiction are designed to participate in "the dramatic and thematic structures" of the works in which they appear, and as such are to be understood in the light

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[99]Wallace Martin, Recent Theories of Narrative, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986, p.116.

[100]Bernard J. Paris, A Psychological Approach to Fiction, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974, p.8.

[101]Cihai (1979), p.693.

of their functions within these structures.[102] In other words, literary characters can be considered as "real" people, or at the very least be described as "person-like" constructs.[103]

Are characters more than the people who inhabit literary works? Schools of Western literary theory such as structuralism and narratology have tended to view the literary character as a mere plot function. Structuralists view characters not as autonomous human beings but as dissolved in a system of literary conventions and codes. Characters become "patterns of recurrence", that is, motifs which are contextualized by the reader from indications within the text.[104] Readers project a "lifelikeness" upon characters by assimilating them to preconceptions of people in real life. Narratologists refer to character as one of a number of "logical participants" at work within a literary text. The nature of the logical participant is considered irrelevant, although it is generally identified as a human being endowed with certain physical attributes.[105] Even if the character is not viewed as a "real" human being, it is commonly equated with people. Seymour Chatman aptly points out that any "viable theory of character" should continue to treat characters as "autonomous beings"

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[102]Paris, p.3.

[103]Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics, London: Routledge, 1983, p.33.

[104]Rimmon-Kenan, p.31. Rimmon-Kenan points out that in 1970 French structuralist Roland Barthes claimed that the character was "obsolescent" in the contemporary novel.

[105]Gerald Prince, Narratology: The Form and Functioning of Narrative, Berlin: Mouton, 1982, p.71. Prince continues by stating that, although the logical participant is usually identified as a person, "should a horse be portrayed as philosophizing and should a table be described as thinking and speaking, they would both constitute characters".

rather than only functions of the plot.[106] In the Chinese context the predilection for mimetic literature has ensured that the character has always been considered as a "person".

Characters may be classified into three distinct, but often co-existing, methods of presentation. This classification has been developed from E.M. Forster's now dated distinctions between the "flat" and the "round" character.[107] The first method is the depiction of a "static" or "stable" character who is constructed around a single trait and whose existence is accounted for as a function of the plot.[108] Such characters remain unchanged in outlook and disposition during the course of the narrative. They may include "types" - characters who stand as representatives of a certain group of people, "stock characters" - stereotypes easily recognized from recurrent appearances in literary tradition, or caricatures.

The second method is the depiction of a "kinetic" character who develops more than one quality during the action and whose motivation extends beyond that which is necessary for accomplishment of plot.[109] Such characters are complex in both temperament and motivation, and undergo a radical change. This change, however, is arguably more accurately perceived as a plot formulation rather than a character formulation, for the character is seen to change against a particular background.[110]

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[106]Chatman, p.119.
[107]E.M. Forster, Aspects of the Novel (1927), repr. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1984, p.40.
[108]Wellek and Warren, p.32; Abrams, p.24.
[109]Wallace Martin, p.116.
[110]Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, The Nature of Narrative, New York: Oxford University Press, 1966, p.168.

The differences between these two methods of characterization are best summed up by Wallace Martin in the following terms:

> Characters are not, then, mere collections of attributes, nor is our sense of their wholeness an illusion based on mistaken assumptions about the soul or spirit. They may remain static, change gradually, undergo a transformation, or never achieve self-definition within the limits of the narrative; though fused with the action... they are not dissolved in it.[111]

The third method of characterization may be described as penetration into the "inner life" of the character. This penetration may be afforded by a number of techniques, most commonly those associated with "modernism" in the West, such as interior monologue and "stream of consciousness". This concept of "peering directly into the mind and dramatizing thoughts instead of words and deeds" is a mark of modernity and appears quite late in most literatures.[112] As Scholes and Kellogg have pointed out, depiction of a character's "inner life" is "the most essential element" in characterization.[113]

Before discussing Chinese methods of characterization, especially with regard to the short stories under review, it may be useful to bear in mind an important point about characterization in the short story. Whereas in the novel characters are given the scope within which to develop, albeit in accordance with the requirements of the plot, the short-storywriter has less opportunity to allow his or her characters to develop. The very nature of the short story affords the reader only a glimpse of the character. As

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[111]Wallace Martin, p.122.

[112]Scholes and Kellogg, p.175. As Chapter vi of this study will show, techniques such as interior monologue first became apparent in Chinese literature in the first decade of the 20th century.

[113]Scholes and Kellogg, p.171.

Valerie Shaw has argued, by reason of its aesthetics, the short story is not intended to be "the medium either for exploration or long-term development of character."[114]

Chinese literature has often evidenced a highly didactic tendency. The moral exemplars of the Confucian line in pre-modern literature are not so far removed from the proletarian heroes of the Maoist-Marxist line. The most important - although by no means exclusive - strategy in Chinese fiction has been to delineate the typicality of character in accordance with literature's didactic intent. One of the major criticisms levelled by Western critics against the pre-modern Chinese novel was the lack of concern for individual characterization.[115] Even in the "artistically more refined" novels of the Ming and Qing dynasties, character types were employed to demonstrate desired behaviour and to disseminate required moral messages.[116] Characters in pre-modern fiction were revealed through their actions. Their "inner lives" were depicted either through conversation or by means of dreams. As well as "showing" the character through his or her actions, the storyteller-narrator would often engage in intrusive "telling", intervening to evaluate the motives and dispositions of the character.

In the post-May Fourth period, Chinese writers moved towards a more direct form of characterization. There was a move towards character

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[114]Shaw, p.118.
[115]Idema, p.xii.
[116]Robert E. Hegel, "Making the Past Serve the Present in Fiction and Drama: From the Yan'an Forum to the Cultural Revolution," in Bonnie S. McDougall, ed., Popular Chinese Literature and Performing Arts in the People's Republic of China 1949-1979, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984, p.209.

development through the depiction of his or her "inner life" which saw the introduction of a number of interior monologue techniques. However, most writers did not have the time to adapt these techniques to the requirements of Chinese literature before pragmatic creativity came to the fore in the late 1930s and 1940s. A number of short stories from the 1920s were also inhabited by character "types". This was especially the case where a writer used a literary character to exemplify a weakness in the Chinese psyche, inviting readers both to identify with the character and to react to him or her in a negative way.[117]

In his "Yan'an Talks" of 1942, Mao Zedong advocated a simplification of the literary character, proposing the eradication of any moral ambiguity and political complexity. Characters were once again to be depicted through their actions rather than through their thoughts. The dominance of the literary line laid down by Mao at Yan'an over Chinese literature in the succeeding decades ensured that much of post-1949 literature was peopled by characters who were not fully developed and whose "inner lives" were not reflected. Robert E. Hegel draws further parallels between this method of characterization and that of pre-modern literature:

> This movement... idealized heroes and villains to a degree congruent with that of Confucian moral tales. But, to the extent that the characters were simultaneously deprived of their human complexity, they became as predictable as their predecessors in older works...[118]

Between 1949 and at least the end of the Cultural Revolution, the main character in most Chinese works of fiction was always the stereotypical

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[117]Granat, p.95.
[118]Hegel, "Making the Past", p.223.

"positive hero". At the Third Congress of Literary and Art Workers in July 1960, Zhou Yang enthusiastically ushered in a "new literary age of communist heroes."[119] The "heroism" of these characters was to be qualified through a personification of revolutionary consciousness in order to reflect the "spirit" of contemporary China.

The performance of Shao Quanlin, deputy chairman of the Writers' Association, at a literary symposium in August 1962 presented a "grave threat" to the further development of Maoist literary theory and practice.[120] Shao spoke out against the concept of the positive hero. He suggested that in order to "deepen" realism it would be acceptable to write about "middle characters" (zhongjian renwu) in addition to positive heroes. These characters were to have been individualized and depicted, at least partly, from a psychological angle. They were to have been neither negative nor positive, because such characters - for example the majority of China's peasants - outnumbered the positive heroes in real life. "Middle characters" were intended to lead Chinese literature from the "blind alley" of heroes and villains.[121] Shao's speech was only publicized in 1964 when parts of it were quoted out of context in the form of a bitter denunciation of the theory of "middle characters".[122]

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[119]Zhou Yang, "The Path of Socialist Literature and Art in Our Country," Chinese Literature, October 1960.

[120]Gálik, "The Concept," p.31. The symposium, held in Dalian, concerned the creation of short stories with a rural theme and was in fact chaired by Shao Quanlin himself.

[121]Gálik, "The Concept," p.33. Hegel argues that in pre-modern literature it was the "middle characters", not the stereotypes, that revealed the author's serious perceptions of their society and that were deliberately depicted realistically. ("Making the Past," p.209).

[122]See the articles "'Xie zhongjian renwu' shi zichan jieji de wenxue zhuzhang" ("Writing Middle Characters" is the Literary Position of the Bourgeoisie) and "Guanyu 'xie zhongjian renwu' de cailiao" (Material

The silencing of any opinions other than those upholding the "positive hero" resulted in the development of "the most monstrous characterization method in literary history."[123] The theory of the "three prominences" (san tuchu), which was developed in 1968 by Yu Huiyong, then Minister of Culture, soon became the constitution for literary and artistic creation in the Cultural Revolution period. The basic premise of the "three prominences" was: of all characters make prominent the positive characters; of the positive characters make prominent the heroic characters; of the heroic characters make prominent the central character.[124] All characters in literature had to be dealt with as subordinate to the "positive hero". This theory resulted in the presentation of stereotypical characters acting within a setting which rejected all normal codes of reality. By the mid-1970s the concept of the "three prominences" had become entrenched in all theories of literary creation. A volume published in Shanghai in 1974 which discussed the creation of the short story contained a number of essays instructing on the portrayal of "the heroic image of the worker-peasant-soldier" (gongnongbing yingxiong xingxiang) and "the guiding role of the heroic character" (yingxiong renwu de zhudao zuoyong).[125] Such

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Concerning "Writing Middle Characters") both of which were published in Wenyi bao, August-September 1964.

[123]Gálik, "The Concept," p.36.

[124]Yu Huiyong, "Rang wenyi wutai yongyuan chengwei xuanchuan Mao Zedong sixiang de zhendi" (Let the Literary Stage Always Be the Front for Propagating Maoist Thought), Wenhui bao, 28 May 1968. Yu Huiyong was formerly a teacher at the Shanghai Music Conservatory and became Minister of Culture in 1968. He apparently committed suicide during the purge of the Gang of Four shortly after the Cultural Revolution.

[125]Duanpian xiaoshuo chuangzuotan (Discussions on the Creation of the Short Story), Shanghai: Shanghai shifan daxue, 1974. The volume was edited by the Literary Discussion Group in the Chinese Department of the Shanghai Normal University and contained a number of model short stories with supporting essays. One of the essays maintains that a character's "inner life" should be reflected in his or her actions: Bao Changxing, "Yong xingdong jieshi yingxiong renwu de neixin shijie" (Reveal the Heroic

characters, whose entire motives and dispositions are revealed fully at first appearance, remain very similar to the "wooden exemplars" of old popular fiction.[126]

In the post-Mao period the "three prominences" theory was swiftly "decanonized" and denounced in the official press as "absolutely preposterous" (huangmiu jielun).[127] The theory of characterization according to stereotype was, however, entrenched in Chinese literary circles, as "literature of the scars" proved. Although roles had been reversed, and once discredited intellectuals and cadres now became the new "heroes", "literature of the scars" continued to be populated by black and white stereotypes. The moral probity of those persecuted by unscrupulous cadres during the Cultural Revolution, usually indicated through the character's dedication to the CCP and its values, was always depicted through external actions.

Characters in many of the short stories in Renmin wenxue and Zuopin during 1979 are rarely developed beyond their function as static types. Characters are seldom given identities which extend beyond their designated roles within the scope of the story. They are drawn to conform to stereotypes with whom the reader may easily identify. They are not treated as individuals but as "standardized human product" drawn to expound a moral or political point.[128]

Character's Inner World through Actions), pp.215-9.

[126]Hegel, "Making the Past," p.223.

[127]"Ping 'san tuchu'" (Appraising the 'Three Prominences'), Renmin ribao, 18 May 1977.

[128]Li Chi, "Communist War Stories," in Cyril Birch, ed., Chinese Communist Literature, New York: Praeger, 1963, p.155.

Those characters working towards the Four Modernizations, for example, are established as morally and politically correct exemplars to be praised and emulated by the reader. They are drawn to be physically appealing. Pan Qing in "Magnetism" is described as having an "honest and sincere" (dunhou) face and "wise and farsighted" (ruizhi) eyes.[129] Chen Xiaoming, the young cadre in "Peach Blossom Crossing", is described as "handsome and spirited" (yingjun).[130] Cong Weixi goes as far as describing Liu Junsheng in "Pure White Water Lily" as being "sweet and lovable" with a permanent smile on his face.[131] Such positive physical attributes reflect the moral probity inherent within each character. Even characters such as Squatty Chen, whose unshaven face and dirty overalls are covered in oil, are drawn to promote a positive image of industriousness.[132]

The positive qualities of these characters are not only revealed through their actions in striving towards the Four Modernizations. Their tragic pasts heighten the "brightness" of the "new period" by continuing to compare it to the cruelty of the Cultural Revolution years. Liu Junsheng's father, an intellectual, was persecuted to death during the Cultural Revolution. Squatty Chen's parents were both killed by the Nationalists when he was a child. Guo Daxing, the main character in Kong Jiesheng's "Because She Was There", has dedicated his life to studying physics in memory of his parents, both teachers who died in prison in 1968.[133] None of these "heroes" of the Four Modernizations are, however, revealed in any

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[129]Zuopin, June 1979, p.16.
[130]Renmin wenxue, October 1979, p.71.
[131]Renmin wenxue, February 1979, p.99.
[132]Renmin wenxue, January 1979, p.90.
[133]Renmin wenxue, October 1979, p.47.

greater depth than that outlined above. These characters appear much more as functions of the plot than as "flesh-and-blood" human beings.

Qiao Guangpu, the eponymous hero of Jiang Zilong's "Manager Qiao Assumes Office", is perhaps the most fully drawn "champion" of the Four Modernizations. Qiao is not, however, the flawless hero of yesteryear. His forthright style causes friction between himself and all those with whom he deals. More importantly, despite being married for several years, Qiao has always been in love with Tong Zhen, whom he met while studying in Leningrad. Qiao may still be perceived as created according to a new theory of "heroic characters". In many respects Jiang Zilong has depicted Qiao very much in the tradition of the "three prominences". As Rudolf G. Wagner has argued, Qiao "occupies the center of the stage throughout" and the other characters are defined only through their relationship to him.[134]

The concept of "three prominences" was an attempt to adapt characterization in drama, particularly "model operas", to that in fiction. Jiang Zilong again upholds this tendency by arranging much of "Manager Qiao Assumes Office" on the pattern of Beijing opera. Qiao is a devotee of opera, he quotes from various operas in the story and even identifies himself with the characters he cites. Extending this idea further, as Wagner has done, the main characters in the short story all seem to have parallels in the world of opera. Qiao Guangpu is identified with Bao Gong, the upright official known for his stressing the dignity of law who plays the lead role in a number of operas. Ji Shen, the ineffectual former factory

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[134]Wagner, p.406.

manager, is identifiable with the role of the villainous "white face" (bailian). Shi Gan, Qiao's trusted aide, is the "old man" (laosheng). Tong Zhen, Qiao's "sweetheart", obviously plays the "female role" (huadan).[135] Considering the characters in this light serves to reinforce the strategy of delineating the typicality of character so prominent in Chinese literature.

Those characters portrayed as suffering as a result of the inhuman policies of the Cultural Revolution period are all depicted in a positive light. They are tragic victims of policies over which they have no control and, although wronged, remain morally upright throughout. These characters have no individualized personality traits, representing the groups within society (adolescents, intellectuals, cadres etc.) who suffered at the hands of the Gang of Four. Indeed their function within the stories highlights the motivation of those officials who carried out the persecution, thereby continuing to condemn the Gang of Four and its adherents.

While there were those fictional cadres who continued to uphold probity and adhered to the changing Party line - for instance, Shi Zhenyu in "The Section Chief's Difficulties" and Gao Hao in "Urgent Message" - a recurrent image in the short stories of 1979 is that of the erring cadre. Standing in direct opposition to those characters striving to achieve modernization, these cadres might be interpreted as a new form of "negative character". In essence, they perform a similar function to those officials in stories about the Cultural Revolution wherein characters suffer at the hands of uncompromising officials. The official CCP line was that the erring cadres

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[135]Wagner, p.425.

of the post-1976 period continued to be tainted by the erroneous practices advocated by the Gang of Four.[136] It would therefore seem appropriate to view them as extensions of, or even replacements, for the "negative characters" depicted in "literature of the scars". Just as those characters working for modernization are described in a positive light, so those characters obscuring modernization are described in negative terms. The eponymous hero of Cheng Yi's "Director Liu", whose indolence and reluctance to deal swiftly with pressing matters sets him at odds with his new superior, is described as having a "tired looking pale face" with his eyebrows in a "perpetual frown".[137] The inefficient cadre who prevents a driver from receiving the truck promised to him in "Bill of Lading" either speaks from behind a newspaper or with his mouth full of cake.[138] Qu Xiong, the political director who is at odds with Pan Qing in "Magnetism", is depicted as having a "permanently long face." It is also a well-known fact that "nobody in the factory had ever seen him smile."[139]

Many of the characters in the short stories carried by Jintian are developed beyond the "static" and even the "kinetic" models outlined above. The writers of these stories attempt to create individuals by delving into their "inner lives". While characters in most of the short stories published in the official journals are described from their external actions and by virtue of their function in the plot, those in the short stories in Jintian are, for the most part, described indirectly through their own

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[136]Hu Yaobang made this point very clear in his keynote speech at the Scriptwriting Symposium of 12 and 13 February 1980. For a transcript of the speech see Wenyi bao, January 1981, pp.2-20.

[137]Renmin wenxue, August 1979, p.25.

[138]Renmin wenxue, May 1979, p.92.

[139]Zuopin, June 1979, p.16.

thought processes. In this respect the stories in themselves are character-centred rather than plot-centred, and it is this emphasis of character above plot which has led to some Western critics labelling these stories as examples of an embryonic Chinese "modernism".[140] Furthermore, that these stories "peer into" the characters' "inner lives" shows that they are aware of the deeper layers of the human mind which do not always correspond with external action - another important marker of "modernism".[141]

It is the establishment writer Wang Meng who has been credited as the "progenitor" of the "modernist" style in China.[142] Two of Wang's fictional works from 1979 - the short story "Ye de yan" (Eyes of the Night) and the novella "Buli" (Bolshevik Salute)[143] - emphasize the psychological musing of the main characters above the action. These works are perhaps more noted for their adoption of "modernist" techniques of characterization than their critical content. Although Wang's name cannot be divorced from the debates on "modernism" in the Chinese literary world which came to a head in the early 1980s, a number of Western critics have argued that Wang's experimental techniques should not be considered "modernism" in the Western sense. Leo Lee states that Wang's claim to "modernism" is but "clever showmanship" and is ultimately written "in the spirit of socialist realism."[144] Wendy Larson expresses a similar view in writing that

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[140]Wedell-Wedellsborg, "Chinese Modernism?" p.97.

[141]Wedell-Wedellsborg, "Chinese Modernism?" p.97.

[142]Leo Ou-fan Lee, "Beyond Realism: Thoughts on Modernist Experiments in Contemporary Chinese Writing," in Howard Goldblatt, ed., Worlds Apart: Recent Chinese Writing and its Audiences, Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1990, p.69.

[143]Published in Guangming ribao, 21 October 1979 and Dangdai (Contemporary), 3 (September) 1979, pp.4-39.

[144]Leo Lee, "Beyond Realism," p.69.

"Bolshevik Salute" is a type of "distinctly Chinese modernism" which uses "modernist" techniques to convey social and political affairs.[145] Nevertheless, Wang's experimentation with literary technique ensured that different styles of writing would become more widely accepted.

Many short stories appearing in Jintian employed methods of characterization similar to "modernism" before debates on the subject raged. Characters in these stories reveal themselves to the reader through associative thinking and personal reminiscing, rather than external action. In Shi Mo's "The Homecoming Stranger", for example, Lanlan's internalized reminiscing on her past contributes to an understanding of her currently cynical state of mind. From her actions in the story alone, the reader would be able to gauge her frame of mind, but only by access to her "inner life" are the reasons for this cynicism elucidated. Similarly in Wan Zhi's "Open Ground" the main character's internalized recollection of his past is paramount to the reader's comprehension of his actions in the main narrative. Without knowledge of the ex-KMT officer's life experience, especially those during the Civil War against the CCP, all of which are revealed through his piecemeal and disconnected thought processes, the reader would only be able to guess why he should be digging up the bones of his ex-comrades at night.

Some of the short stories describe very little surface action, but by giving the reader access to the characters' cognitive processes, the authors

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[145]Wendy Larson, "Wang Meng and the Modernist Controversy in Contemporary China," Bolshevik Salute: A Modernist Chinese Novel, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1989, p.xvi.

present a very rounded view of their creations. On a superficial level Yi Shu's "French Horn" describes a sexual encounter in a nocturnal Beijing park. More important, however, is the tortuous first-person narrative of the young man attempting to balance the emotional and intellectual facets of his being. This narrative allows the reader access into the psychological meanderings of the young man, as his perceptions and sensations are revealed through a complex series of disconnected images. His partner, on the other hand, remains a "static" character as she may only be perceived through the scant snatches of dialogue and the elliptical action in the story. Similarly "Yuanliang wo xiongdi" (Forgive Me Brothers) by Tian Ran presents, on the surface, a cadre dozing in his office declining to see the waiting visitors.[146] The cadre's character is revealed through his inner thoughts as the workings of his mind alternate between introspective reminiscing and dreaming. As in "French Horn" these thought processes are revealed through a series of complex images. The cadre's guilt at his appalling treatment of others in the pursuit of an official career is alluded to, rather than stated directly, in a recurring symbol of his running in a desert only to be constricted by a snake which emerges from the sand.

Not all the stories carried by Jintian adopt these "modernist" methods of characterization. In Shu Sheng's "Zai xiaogongyuan li" (In the Small Park), for instance, a factory manager and a "counter-revolutionary", both of whom have been diagnosed with cancer, meet by chance on a park bench and strike up a friendship.[147] The two characters are representations of familiar social stereotypes. Their purpose in the plot is not to develop into

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[146]Jintian, 4 (20 June 1979), pp.23-30.
[147]Jintian, 6 (December 1979), pp.57-62.

more "rounded" people but to show that representatives of different social "classes" may achieve an understanding when faced with adversity. Qiu Xia, the rusticated student in "The Get-Together", is presented as a more "rounded" character. There is, however, no portrayal of her thought processes. Her disillusion with life is expressed through dialogue and actions, most especially the tragic circumstances of her suicide. Written by and primarily for those young people who had endured the rigours of rustication, "The Get-Together" only required to hint at certain actions and situations for the intended reader to be aware of the psychological processes behind those actions.

3.8 CONCLUSIONS

While themes might be considered as broadly universal, subject matter is perhaps more closely associated with the sociohistorical environment in which literature is written. This is even more the case in China of the late 1970s, when much official literature was still written to serve political ends. Recurrent subject matter in the short stories in the official journals under review adheres to the ideological demands of the CCP line and, as such, fulfils a propagandistic function. That 36% of the short stories in the database - whether published in official or nonofficial journals - continue to reflect the sequelae of the Cultural Revolution is hardly surprising considering that period's far-reaching effect on all levels of society. There are, however, fundamental differences in the approach to this subject matter between official and nonofficial journals. Short stories published in the former were still required to suggest political reasons for the suffering - although individual suffering, if perceived from the "correct" standpoint,

was beginning to be acceptable. Short stories published in the latter enjoyed more freedom to explore the psychological effects of the suffering.

Despite the differences in approach, the actual subject matter of the stories published in Renmin wenxue, Zuopin and Jintian fails to go beyond "realism".[148] These stories may be described as "realist" inasmuch as they reflect the society around them (e.g. consequences of the Cultural Revolution, social goals in the post-Cultural Revolution period, the [im]probity of officials) with a reasonable degree of verisimilitude. Moreover, Northrop Frye has defined subject matter as the major determinant of "genre".[149] In this case the short stories in the database, including those carried by Jintian, may be seen as falling into the realm of "realism". In their continued adoption of "realist" subject matter these stories reflect a degree of continuity in 20th century Chinese fiction's tendency towards "realism".

The most apparent difference between the short stories published in official and nonofficial journals lies not in what is being told but rather in how it is told. The narrative technique of many of the stories in Jintian shares little in common with the "traditional" modes of "realism". The abovementioned critiques of Wang Meng, whose attempts at "modernist technique" failed to lift the subject matter of his works beyond "socialist realism", should also be borne in mind.[150] The difference between the

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[148]Pan Yuan and Pan Jie make this point about the fiction published in Jintian (p.209).

[149]Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957, p.293.

[150]Leo Lee, "Beyond Realism," p.69; William Tay, "Wang Meng, Stream-of-consciousness and the Controversy over Modernism," Modern Chinese Literature, Vol.1 No.1, September 1984, p.13.

types of journal might best be appreciated in this chapter through the methods of characterization preferred in each case.

Whereas the short stories in the official journals are mostly dominated by plot to the extent that the character is defined as he or she relates to the action of that plot, many of the short stories in Jintian are character-centred in that the character's thoughts and feelings predominate. The portrayal of a character's "inner life" and thought processes which form an integral part of the character-centred narrative is often conveyed by techniques associated with "modernism". The use of such techniques, whether or not they can be described as "modernist" in the Western sense, is certainly uncommon in post-1949 Chinese fiction. This in itself points to a degree of innovation on the part of the writers contributing short stories to Jintian. The methods of characterization preferred by those writers published in Renmin wenxue and Zuopin, on the other hand, share much in common with the stereotypical delineation of exemplary types which has been a feature of Chinese fiction since the pre-modern period.

Chapter Four:
Stylistics:
Diction and Imagery

4.1 DEFINING STYLISTICS

Stylistics is a term which has been applied to refer to the objective analysis of the style of literary texts.[1] In short, it is the study of use of language in literature, concentrating specifically on the figurative uses of that language. In referring to how a writer writes, stylistics concerns all those devices aimed at specific expressive ends.[2] Literary style may be analysed through the aesthetic purpose of a work, that is, its usage of figurative language in the form of images, symbols and motifs. Literary style is also closely bound to diction, that is, the choice of words used in the text.[3]

Different categories of literary style have been used in reference to the works of a particular author or literary period. In recent years, however, this broad definition has been narrowed to refer to the style of a particular work. As René Wellek and Austin Warren have warned, determining the style of a specific period from the style of a group of works, or of a single

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[1]Abrams, p.284. Much of the impetus towards the analytical methods of stylistics was provided by the Russian Formalists, such as Roman Jakobson, and also European structuralists. It was a methodology aimed at replacing the "subjectivity" and "impressionism" of traditional critical practices.

[2]Wellek and Warren, p.180. Wellek and Warren point out that defining stylistics solely in terms of aesthetics unnecessarily limits the study of a work of art.

[3]Baldick, pp.214-5.

work or author, would be "extraordinarily difficult to do with any empirical closeness."[4] There are, nonetheless, a number of unifying principles linking literary styles and aesthetic aims of writers working in the same period: current uses of language, current aesthetic norms and, especially in the case of contemporary China, current political demands on literary style.

Figurative language refers to use of imagery in a literary work. Although the term "imagery" is one of the most often used in modern criticism, it is also "one of the most variable in meaning."[5] The language used in imagery is different from that of abstract exposition. It evokes "sense impressions" or mental "pictures" by figurative reference to concrete objects, senses, actions or states. These "pictures" are not necessarily visual but may appeal to senses other than sight.[6] The contemporary Chinese definition of image (xingxiang) is essentially similar to its Western counterpart. It is described as a means of expressing an author's subjective thoughts and feelings through concrete pictures which combine art and real life. A literary image should, however, always be subordinated to the ideological standpoint, life experience and artistic training of the writer.[7]

The language a writer uses in his or her work (or "diction") is undoubtedly a major determinant of literary style. Not only does diction include the kinds of words and the figurative expressions constituting a

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[4]Wellek and Warren, p.182.
[5]Abrams, p.86.
[6]Baldick, p.106.
[7]Cihai (Word Sea), Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 1979, p.1862.

work of literature, but it also affects the wider development of language. A literary work may be interpreted as a "selection of material from a given language" and as such may be used as a source document for the study of linguistics.[8] A linguistic analysis of literature may only be successful, however, if it bears in mind the stylistic aims of language in literature.

Before analysing the short stories in the database from the angles of use of language (diction) and figurative expression (imagery), it is necessary to set the stylistic aims of the writers in their proper context. A discussion of the influence of the Maoist literary line on style is essential. The use of language and any recurrent imagery in the short stories may then be interpreted according to any changes in their applications to the form(s) advocated by the Maoist literary line.

4.2 THE DOMINANCE OF "MAOIST DISCOURSE"

From the 1940s until the mid-1980s the style and form of language used in all official literary works in the PRC was highly politicized. In accordance with the line laid down by Mao Zedong in Yan'an in 1942, literature in the Maoist era rarely amounted to anything more than a transmutation of ideological orthodoxy into the literary form. This literature was not only formulated to propagate Maoist Thought, but was also based on the style of modern vernacular Chinese adopted by Mao in his voluminous canon of theoretical writings, ideological tracts and political directives. As the critic Li Tuo has argued, it would be "difficult to

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[8]Wellek and Warren, p.174.

overestimate the influence of Mao's writings" on the development of both Chinese language and literature.[9] Li has therefore referred to this literary form as an integral part of "Maoist Discourse" (Mao wenti), a deeply entrenched and far-reaching ideology which achieved "an absolute dominance over all [other] forms of discourse" in the PRC for over four decades.[10]

Maoist Discourse refers to something much more fully embracing than the phraseology of language. It is an entire system of ideology which was revealed in and promoted through "discourse". As it is understood in the West, "discourse" has come to denote language "in actual use within its social and ideological context" and "in institutionalized representations of the world."[11] It is a "social parlance", the product and manifestation of a particular set of social conditions.[12] Discourse therefore covers a wide range of cultural activities, from art and literature, to customs and habits, to the execution of political power or the regulation of material production. This "discursive activity" is controlled by an interpretation system - an ideology which "tries to ensure the expected interpretation of all discursive activities."[13]

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[9]Li Tuo, "The New Vitality of Modern Chinese," in Wendy Larson and Anne Wedell-Wedellsborg, eds., Inside Out: Modernism and Postmodernism in Chinese Literary Culture, Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1993, p.73.

[10]Li Tuo, "New Vitality," p.65; See also Li Tuo, "1985," Jintian, 14-15 (1991), pp.59-73;

[11]Baldick, p.59.

[12]Abrams, p.262.

[13]Henry Y.H. Zhao, The Uneasy Narrator: Chinese Fiction from the Traditional to the Modern, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, p.1. Zhao points out that, in his view, "discourse" points to any activity of communication and signification.

The style of Mao's writings which were set up as models for prospective writers to emulate after 1949 was, apart from his classical-style poetry, developed from the "vernacularized" literary medium of the post-May Fourth period. This vernacularized medium (baihuawen) incorporated elements of a Euro-Japanese style at the expense of the traditional Chinese literary style. Baihuawen was itself influenced by a body of translated works which were created under the influence of the grammar and syntax of Western languages in the 1910s and 1920s.[14] The establishment of this new mode of literary discourse resulted from more than a desire for experimentation and innovation. It was an integral part of the move among China's intellectuals to achieve an ideological and cultural coherence which could only be attained in "immanent, holistic terms."[15] The development of a modern Chinese language and a modern Chinese literature was inseparable from changes in society as a whole. The revolution in language of the May Fourth era therefore stretched far beyond the realm of literature.

By the late 1920s baihuawen had become the accepted mode for literary creation among most Chinese writers. The form of baihuawen fashioned by writers such as Mao Dun during the 1930s gradually became the "normalized" convention for literary creation in the 1950s and beyond.[16] This language was, in many respects, designed to serve ideological ends. Mao Dun strove to develop a literary language which, through both its diction and structure, would suitably support "realism". Once Mao Dun had pioneered and popularized this new language, he was able to seed it with

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[14]Li Tuo, "New Vitality," p.67.
[15]David Der-wei Wang, p.2.
[16]Edward Gunn, Rewriting Chinese: Style and Innovation in Twentieth Century Chinese Prose, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991, p.105.

his own ideological predilections. Although "realist" literature was supposed to present the author's "objective observation of and research into reality," following Mao Dun's espousal of Marxism, the perspective of that observation and research became narrowed.[17] Through his writings, Mao Dun was able to introduce Marxist thought in terms that were acceptable to - and even stylish with - the intellectual readership of the "new literature".[18]

The form of baihuawen developed by Mao Dun and others did not become the only acceptable mode for literary creation until it had been adopted by Mao Zedong and imbued with his particular ideological convictions. Although it was already devoid of some of the distinctive qualities of the classical language, which were still evident in the writings of, for example, Lu Xun and Shen Congwen, in his political essays and directives on literature, Mao Zedong reduced this language to a documentary prose "suited to advance the ideas of a leader seeking or asserting [his] dominance."[19] Following Mao's accession to power in 1949, this "one particular style of baihuawen" not only dominated all literary works, but also provided the discourse in which all intellectual activity had to be carried out.[20]

Maoist Discourse is tightly bound to the political superstructure exercised by the CCP. As the Marxist theorist Louis Althusser has argued, the state apparatus operates through an ideological discourse which calls upon the individual to adopt a pre-established "subject position". This

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[17]Anderson, p.57.
[18]Gunn, p.105.
[19]Gunn, p.139.
[20]Li Tuo, "New Vitality," p.74.

position in turn serves the ultimate interests of the ruling class.[21] It is through this ideological discourse that the power structure of a society is able to achieve its dominance. The CCP under the leadership of Mao was no exception. In order to achieve ideological dominance and thereby secure total political leadership, the demands of Maoist Discourse ensured that the same "correct" view was always propagated using the same language system and the same style and form of writing. The messages encoded in the writings were also similar in ideological intent. Maoist Discourse therefore became an effective means of "controlling people's thinking" by denying them access to any alternative.[22]

Maoist Discourse broke down any barriers which may have existed between literary and non-literary texts. Furthermore it was intolerant of the coexistence of any other form of expression. Maoist Discourse may therefore be described as upholding a form of "cultural monism" which was all-encompassing. Li Tuo comments aptly on this point:

> All forms of writing, all types of speech, all kinds of thought processes, whether a treatise on philosophy or a newspaper article or a textbook or even traffic regulations, whether an academic debate or everyday small talk or even the language of courtship between young people - all were but different forms of one kind of discourse, an endless stream of words all signifying the same thing.[23]

The key to understanding the ideology behind Maoist Discourse is to be found in the "Yan'an Talks". Although they were developed with literature and art in mind, the "Yan'an Talks" amounted to a summary of Mao's views on politics. Mao, like Lenin before him, perceived literature as a political

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[21]Quoted in Abrams, p.244.
[22]Li Tuo, "New Vitality," p.74.
[23]Li Tuo, "New Vitality," p.74.

weapon in the class struggle and an organizational tool for society. Literature was nothing more than an instrument for inspiration and education - a cog in the propaganda machine. In the "Yan'an Talks" Mao outlined the perceived function of the "written word" vis-à-vis the socialist revolution:

> The purpose of our meeting today is precisely to ensure that literature and art fit well into the revolutionary machine as a component part, that they operate as powerful weapons for uniting and educating the people and for attacking and destroying the enemy, and that they help the people fight the enemy with one heart and mind.[24]

This rather militaristic concept of literature continued to be propagated by the CCP until the end of the 1970s. This in itself points to the inflexibility and stagnation of literary policy during the Maoist era. Lin Biao's view of literature in 1964 closely echoes the comments made by Mao some two decades earlier:

> The aim of literature and art is to unite and educate the people, to inspire the revolutionary spirit, and to exterminate the enemy... It is a forceful weapon. It is a tool for the propagation of Marxism-Leninism and Maoist Thought.[25]

In its original Yan'an context, the purpose of literature was to assist in the ideological "struggle" against the "enemy". Writers were to be conscripted into a "cultural army" (wenhua de jundui) where their works were to become weapons. These weapons had to be designed so as to deliver the "correct" message to the readership: that the "enemy" had to

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[24]Mao Tse-tung, Talks at the Yenan Forum on Literature and Art, Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1965, p.2.

[25]Quoted in Dubao shouce (Handbook on Newspaper Reading), Jiangsu: Renmin chubanshe, 1969, p.825.

be exposed and its "inevitable defeat" described.[26] Just as political treatises continued to warn against the "enemies" of the "correct" ideological line - the Japanese, the Nationalists, landlords, the bourgeoisie, rightists, capitalist roaders and, after 1976, adherents of the Gang of Four - literary works portrayed similar "enemies" receiving their just deserts at the hands of the CCP. There was no difference in the "enemies" alluded to in the political essays and the more specific (although no more individualized) "negative characters" depicted in literature.

During the decades following the "Yan'an Talks", the purpose of literature became more clearly defined against the ever narrowing confines of "correct" ideology. In short, with literature serving politics, literary policy could be interpreted and implemented according to the needs of the Party during its various political campaigns of the 1950s and 1960s. Literary works, criticism and theory eventually became no more than regurgitations of Maoist dicta, barely distinguishable from any other ideological or political treatise.

The substance of literary works was also elucidated in Mao's "Yan'an Talks". "Correct" ideology was to be propagated through a cultural system developed around literature written for and about workers, peasants and soldiers. The "masses" (qunzhong), represented by literary characters drawn from among the workers, peasants and soldiers, were to be extolled. They were to be depicted through positive imagery and shown contributing to the construction of socialism. The portrayal of these characters in

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[26]Mao Tse-tung, p.3.

literature failed to differ from the idealized exemplars propagated in newspaper reports. As Mao advocated in 1942, people and life reflected in literature ought to be "on a higher plane, more intense, more concentrated, more typical, nearer the ideal" than in everyday life.[27] In many respects this pointed to a literature that was no longer mimetic. The society depicted in literature in Maoist Discourse was idealized and stereotypical. This mode of literary creation could no longer be termed "realist" in any objective sense.

The language of Maoist Discourse, as developed from Mao's own writings, was also prescribed in the "Yan'an Talks". The "Talks" set about establishing a new mass popular culture which would ensure the propagation of Maoist ideology to all areas of Chinese society. This was to be based upon a "popularization" (puji) of the language of literary creation. Writers were to learn and then use the "simple and plain" (jiandan qianxian) language with which the masses were familiar. This simplification of language served two purposes. Firstly, it brought literature within the grasp of the common people by removing from it the lyricism of the classical language and the experimental techniques of the post-May Fourth writers. Secondly, it helped eradicate any ideological complexity or ambiguity which may have arisen in literature written in a more demanding style. In essence, literary language adopted the simplistic pragmatism of the ideological essay, often reading as verbatim regurgitations of official CCP documents rather than as the expressive language commonly associated with literary creation. The literature

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[27]Mao Tse-tung, p.19.

published in the PRC in the 1950s and 1960s was therefore better suited to carrying the Party's message in a manner "compatible with the mass audience's literary and artistic expectations."[28]

In his "Yan'an Talks" Mao clearly stated that it was wrong to depart from the literary policy he was advocating. Any departure, he claimed, would be "duly corrected".[29] After 1949 any work of literature which was deemed as deviating from "serving" workers, peasants and soldiers was immediately criticized by the literary authorities. It was the responsibility of literary critics, themselves under obligation to the demands of Maoist Discourse, to denounce any writer who strayed from the "correct" path of literary creation. The vitriolic denunciation in 1955 of Hu Feng for suggesting that literature should depict more than the experiences of the revolutionary masses stands as one example of this. Furthermore, the influential voice of CCP members on the editorial boards of official journals ensured that any potentially aberrant works never achieved publication. On a wider scale, any dissenting voices were silenced through a series of successive crackdowns. Writers perhaps suffered most as a result of these crackdowns.

Maoist Discourse, the only acceptable mode of expression (whether that expression be written, spoken or, in some cases, thought) for about forty years, served to hold together Mao's power structure. In many respects the relationship between the two was reciprocal, for CCP dominance in all areas of society was both built upon and also perpetuated itself through

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[28]McDougall, "Writers and Performers," p.286.
[29]Mao Tse-tung, p.25.

Maoist Discourse.[30] The systems of belief embodied in this discourse formed a subtext - albeit an obvious and explicit subtext - which permeated all officially sanctioned literary works. Although the authority of Maoist Discourse extended much deeper than literature, the emphasis of this study is on the effect of that discourse on literature and on fiction in particular.

In the Maoist era there were a number of attempts at literary creation outside of Maoist Discourse. Bei Dao, for example, writes of the "translation style" which the authorities "tolerated" in the 1960s.[31] This style was exhibited in the translation of a number of works of contemporary Western literature. The "means of expression" required for these translations was not offered by Maoist Discourse and, as a result, the "translation style" dislocated itself from the mainstream and developed independently. These translations were originally restricted for purchase only by senior cadres, and in this way the authorities were able to control the sphere of influence of the "translation style". However, during the Cultural Revolution they were circulated widely among rusticated youth. Within these works would-be writers found "a mature Chinese language style" which was totally different from the official discourse.[32] When they began creating themselves, often in the form of shouchaoben, the young writers were undoubtedly influenced by these books.

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[30]Li Tuo, "New Vitality," p.65.

[31]Bei Dao, p.60. See also Chapter i of this study for more on the influence of the "translation style" on underground literature in the 1970s. Bei Dao highlights a series of translations of Western modernist literature published by the Zuojia chubanshe in 1962 as most indicative of the "translation style". This series included: Kafka, The Trial; Camus, L'etranger; Sartre, La Nausée; Salinger, Catcher in the Rye; Kerouac, On the Road; Beckett, Waiting for Godot; Ehrenburg, The Thaw etc.

[32]Bei Dao, p.64.

While "literature of the scars" was indicative of a new stage of "worker-peasant-soldier literature" created very much in the Maoist Discourse, the contributors to Jintian may be described as "young pioneers" who have boldly renounced the revolutionary tradition and have embraced a new literary style.[33] The style of the literature published in Jintian, especially the poetry, may be interpreted as the first "attack" on Maoist Discourse.

The poetry published in Jintian was arguably more influential and more controversial than the short stories. The works of young poets such as Bei Dao, Gu Cheng, Shu Ting and Jiang He, which have been described as "hermetic poetry" (menglongshi),[34] promoted a symbolic subtlety - coupled with an evident lack of didacticism - and on occasions also emphasized "imagistic perspecuity".[35] These poets' use of unconnected juxtapositions of images are reminiscent of of the fundamental techniques of imagism. The term menglong is often interpreted in terms of images: mists, the moon behind a cloud, landscape seen through snow or drizzle, a state between dreaming and waking or, as has been grandly argued, "it is the aura breathed by the mountains in the great landscape tradition of Chinese

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[33]Leo Lee, "Beyond Realism," p.67.

[34]The term "menglongshi" has been rendered in English in a number of ways: "misty poetry", "obscure poetry" and "poetry of the shadows" are among the most common. (John Minford, "Into the Mist," in Stephen C. Soong and John Minford, eds., Trees on the Mountain: An Anthology of New Chinese Writing, Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1984, pp.182-86). The term "hermetic poetry", first raised by Angus Graham, has latterly become popular. See for example Wolfgang Kubin, "The End of the Prophet, Chinese Poetry between Modernity and Postmodernity," in Wendy Larson and Anne Wedell-Wedellsborg, eds., Inside Out: Modernism and Postmodernism in Chinese Literary Culture, Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1993, pp.19-37.

[35]William Tay, "'Obscure Poetry': A Controversy in Post-Mao China," in Jeffrey C. Kinkley, ed., After Mao: Chinese Literature and Society 1978-1981, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985, p.136.

painting, the luminous cloud of the Daoist immortal, drifting back towards its source, the primordial flux."[36] The critic and writer Yu Pingbo has defined menglong as "that quality in poetry which defies normal logic, as when an image or phrase leaps directly from the subconscious, without interference from the conscious mind."[37]

Established Chinese poets, fearful of hermetic poetry's assault on Maoist Discourse, were initially very hostile towards the trend. Ai Qing referred to the poetry as incomprehensible and not serving the people. Zang Kejia wrote of a lone, funereal voice bewitching the readers with its morose tone. Tian Jian bemoaned the poetry's political and ideological content, claiming it failed to serve socialism. The "problem" with the poetry was not, in reality, one of obscurity. Many readers readily comprehended the cryptic lines, political content was hidden behind poetic devices, and the hidden light casting these poetic shadows evoked in the reader's mind certain responses, "certain possible directions of thought that the critics could not keep under control".[38]

Although the transformation of contemporary Chinese literature began with the appearance of Hermetic Poetry, challenge to Maoist Discourse in the official literary sphere only came to the fore in 1985 when "root-seeking literature" (xungen wenxue) "dethroned" "worker-peasant-soldier literature" as the only viable literary language.[39] This did not, however,

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[36]Minford, p.182.

[37]Yu Pingbo, Zaban'r zhi er (Hotchpotch Number Two, 1931), quoted in Minford, p.183.

[38]Minford, p.185.

[39]Li Tuo, "New Vitality," p.74. Representatives of xungen wenxue include Wang Zengqi, He Liwei, A Cheng, Zhaxi Dawa, Zheng Wanlong, Han

signify an end to Maoist Discourse, merely a dilution of its dominance. Those short stories created under the banner of "root-seeking literature" established a cultural code completely different to that embedded in Maoist Discourse.[40] In "seeking the roots" of Chinese culture, the writers of these stories brought into question the spiritual essence and artistic traditions of that culture through the use of foreign literary techniques such as the absurd and black humour. Liu Zaifu, the renowned PRC critic, has written, somewhat misleadingly, that the messages and meanings encoded in "root-seeking literature" often required "the 'code-breaking' of a literary critic before readers can understand the riddle."[41]

Any analysis of the images which recur in the short stories in the database and the language in which they are couched should be mindful of Maoist Discourse and its demands on style. If the first sustained challenge to Maoist Discourse in the official sphere did not materialize until 1985, it follows that those short stories published in Renmin wenxue and Zuopin may continue to attest to the dominance of Maoist Discourse over official literature. The short stories published in Jintian, a journal which sought to fight against the "stranglehold" the "stereotyped style" of Maoist Discourse exerted over literary creation,[42] may evidence a challenge to this style and present something more innovative.

Shaogong, Jia Pingwa and Li Hangyu. The writings of these "root-seekers" reflect life in regions untouched by modern civilization, revealing the ignorance that characterizes such culturally isolated areas, and which has slowed the flow of the nation's progress.

[40]Li Tuo, "New Vitality," p.75.

[41]Liu Zaifu, "Chinese Literature in the Past Ten Years: Spirit and Direction," Chinese Literature, Autumn 1989, p.176.

[42]Ling Bing, "Dafu" (Reply), Jintian, 9 (July 1980), p.61.

4.3 DICTION: THE USES OF LANGUAGE

Diction refers not only to the type of language used in a literary text but also to the way in which that language is used. Literature is a mode of communication between author and reader. The language of that communication is bound by the rhetorical dimension of the text. Modes of discourse may be interpreted as comprising rhetorical elements which "persuade or otherwise guide" the responses of the reader.[43]

Language in much, if not all, of the literature published in the PRC between 1949 and 1978 was designed to underline the message put out by the Party Centre. The rhetorical message carried by Maoist Discourse effectively limited the scope of language which might be used in literary (and other) texts. For example, many of the short stories published in Renmin wenxue and Zuopin in 1979 contain examples of the vocabulary and phraseology used by Mao in his ideological writings.

As the narrator of "Hujiang xing" (Song of the Brave General) elucidates, whereas in the past guns were used to defeat the "enemy", Marxism is the weapon now required to "defend" (hanwei) socialism and the Four Modernizations.[44] In the post-Mao period the Gang of Four is the new "enemy" against which to struggle. Political and theoretical essays from the late 1970s commonly referred to the Gang of Four in highly negative and

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[43]Abrams, p.181. The advocates of reader-response criticism have rejected the rhetorical view that responses are affected by devices designed for that purpose by the author in favour of the reader's interpretation responses to the sequence of words in a literary text.

[44]Renmin wenxue, January 1979, p.35.

disparaging terms. They were a group of "schemers" (yinmoujia) who sought to "distort history" (cuangai lishi) by means of counter-revolutionary "intrigue" (jiliang) and who deserved to be "swept onto the rubbish heap of history."[45] Descriptions of the Gang of Four in short stories were phrased in similarly derogatory language. They have been variously described as "arch usurpers of state power",[46] "absolutely vicious" (wan'e),[47] and compared to a "pack of rabid dogs."[48] Such bitter invective had often been used in the past to refer to the "enemies" of the "people".

Another concept central to Maoist Discourse was the depiction of the CCP as the "saviour" of the Chinese nation. This standpoint was less tenable in the post-Cultural Revolution period, when policies practised in the name of the CCP had caused so much harm to so many. Nevertheless, the official line continued to uphold the image of a bright future now that those elements which had usurped the Party-line were being severely dealt with by the regime in power. Short stories were designed to propagate this image. No matter how much characters suffered in the early stages of the story, by the conclusion there was always hope in the persona of Hua Guofeng, Mao's immediate successor as chairman of the CCP. This conclusion often appeared in the form of a lamely attached "bright tail" (guangming weiba) which, by means of its idealized language and positive imagery, set the horrors of the past in a "correct" context.

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[45]See, for example, Renmin ribao, 13 February 1977, p.2.
[46]Renmin wenxue, October 1979, p.72.
[47]Renmin wenxue, November 1979, p.112.
[48]Renmin wenxue, August 1979, p.98.

A number of short stories draw to a close with similarly worded statements professing gratitude to Hua Guofeng for bringing an end to the extremism of the Cultural Revolution period. The narrator of Kong Jiesheng's "Jiehou yinhua daixue kai" (Silver Flowers Blossom with Blood after Being Plundered), a poet, happens to be in the capital in October 1976. His paean to Hua Guofeng is couched in effusive terms:

> Thank you Chairman Hua! You've saved the Chinese revolution which was in crisis. You've saved hundreds of millions of people who were suffocated by the white terror! China is undergoing a great change. Everything will be bright again. Everything will be born again.[49]

The "bright tail" of Ji Guanwu's "Candou zaoshu" (Broad Beans Ripen Early), in which the problems of Pearl Farm are solved in the post-Cultural Revolution period, voices the thoughts of cadre Zhao Keqian in similar terms: "The Party Central Committee led by Chairman Hua has brought hope and warmth to Pearl Farm. Suddenly everyone has been immersed in happiness!"[50] Secretary Li in "Timu weiding de gushi" (A Story as yet Untitled) by Shu Qun thanks "the Party Central Committee led by Chairman Hua" for "crushing" (fensui) the Gang of Four and thereby allowing him to return to work.[51] Likewise Song Yuchun, the main character in Miao Ge's "Xingqiri" (Sunday), believes that her daughter's trust in "the Party Central Committee led by Chairman Hua" will enable her to join the Youth league, despite the family's political problems.[52]

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[49]Zuopin, January 1978, p.8.
[50]Renmin wenxue, January 1979, p.54.
[51]Renmin wenxue, February 1979, p.90.
[52]Renmin wenxue, July 1979, p.88.

Wendy Larson has written that continued references to patriotism and nation in Chinese literature supported the dominance of Maoist Discourse inasmuch as they constituted "an overarching framework for interpretative strategies of official life."[53] Mao's "Yan'an Talks" were conceived against the specific historical background of the Anti-Japanese War and, as a result, contain pervasive patriotic sentiments. For the decades following Yan'an, literary and theoretical texts continued to foster a sense of patriotic duty, a duty which has, at its centre, the continued dominance of the CCP. As late as 1989, "patriotism" (aiguo zhuyi) was officially defined as "intensifying socialist construction, striving towards a united Motherland which includes Taiwan, opposing hegemonism and maintaining world peace."[54]

Literary texts promoting national pride as it was determined by the Party line continued to be prevalent in the post-Mao period. A sense of patriotism was initially fostered in the concerted struggle against the Gang of Four. As the imprisoned teacher in Wan Jie's "Nanyou" (Fellow Sufferer) makes abundantly clear, the Gang of Four "wanted to destroy the Motherland and everything that belonged to the Chinese people."[55] By 1979, however, it was common for literature to couch the main policies of the day, especially the Four Modernizations, in patriotic terms. The idealistic student in Zhang Bin's "Qingchun chaqu" (Interlude of Youth) tells his girlfriend as he lies ill in hospital: "We must be prepared to devote our youth to the

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[53]Wendy Larson, "Literary Modernism and Nationalism in Post-Mao China," in Larson and Anne Wedell-Wedellsborg, eds., Inside Out: Modernism and Postmodernism in Chinese Literary Culture, Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1993, p.174.

[54]Cihai (1979), p.1687.

[55]Zuopin, July 1979, p.22.

Motherland. One day China will achieve the Four Modernizations and what we're doing now is preparing for that day."[56] These comments, coming as they do at the most romantic point in the action, appear more as a propaganda treatise than as tender words of love. The most eligible bachelor in Chinese fiction of the late 1970s was one who appeared politically correct and who vocally echoed the policies of the day.

The relationship between Yang Guihua and Liu Daquan in "Xiang duixiang" (Looking over a Boyfriend) by Wang Anyou is cemented by their joint effort towards agricultural modernization. Liu argues in the closing stages of the story that they "would have to make great strides in the new long march" and "devote all their energy into rapidly achieving the Four Modernizations for the Motherland."[57] The fact that Yang should fall in love with and agree to marry Liu seems highly unlikely when considering her comments several pages earlier. At the beginning of the story she is determined not to fall in love as "we young people should put all our thoughts into working all out for agricultural modernization" for agriculture is "the foundation of the national economy" and central to "the Motherland's building of the Four Modernizations."[58] The author is clearly stating that Yang's relationship with Liu is "acceptable" as their conjoining is based on a patriotic commitment to the Four Modernizations rather than on physical attraction.

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[56]Renmin wenxue, March 1979, p.34.
[57]Renmin wenxue, March 1979, p.37.
[58]Renmin wenxue, March 1979, p.82.

Characters from a variety of backgrounds and in a variety of situations spew out similarly phrased eulogies of the Four Modernizations. The narrator of "Song of the Brave General", a soldier, in reminiscing on the fate of a military commander who suffered during the Cultural Revolution, comments on the task facing China in the following terms:

> Time is passing very quickly and it has already been two years since the smashing of the Gang of Four. We have to achieve the Four Modernizations for the Motherland... The dialectics of history have already pushed our nation into a new period.[59]

The narrator of Liu Xinwu's "Wo ai meipian lüye" (I Love Every Green Leaf), a teacher (i.e. an intellectual) who reflects on the fate of a hapless colleague, perceives the "new period" in similar terms:

> The day finally came and the Gang of Four fell from power... Actually achieving the Four Modernizations was in itself a revolution, and my daily teaching might also be seen as a revolutionary activity...[60]

The truck driver (i.e. a worker) in "Yizhang tidan" (Bill of Lading) by Ji Enshou, who is continually frustrated by bureaucratic obstacles in his attempts to secure a truck, reflects on the current sociopolitical environment in remarkably similar language:

> We have to achieve the Four Modernizations by the end of the century, therefore time is of the essence! Leading comrades on the Party Central Committee are labouring day and night. How many comrades and how many among the worker-peasant-soldier masses are desperate to do ten days' work in one?[61]

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[59]Renmin wenxue, January 1979, p.36.
[60]Renmin wenxue, June 1979, p.104.
[61]Renmin wenxue, May 1979, p.94.

Even the elderly hermit Old Man Mountain Spirit in "Lülang" (Green Waves) by Luo Ju, despite having lived in a mountain hut for many years, refers to the nation's future in similar politicized language:

> When you think about it, there are exactly twenty three years between the time the Gang of Four fell from power and the year 2000! Old Man Mountain Spirit said that he would certainly live until the day the Four Modernizations were achieved...[62]

Such passages epitomize the language used in many of the short stories from Renmin wenxue and Zuopin. That characters from different social backgrounds and in a number of circumstances repeat very similar political phrases is indicative of the pervading nature of Maoist Discourse.

Patriotism revealed through the repeating of political dicta in a literary context is conducted on several levels. Literature, and especially the short story which could be reined in at short notice to fulfil such a function, was employed as part of the propaganda machine justifying China's border skirmishes with Vietnam in early 1979. The stories, in their depiction of fearless soldiers fighting for, and even dying for, their country, failed to reveal the disastrous truth behind China's ill-fated attempts at a show of force along the border. What the reader gained from the short stories written on the subject were not fictionalized accounts of the war but fictionalized accounts of the glorified crusade the CCP would like the war to have been. The dominance of Maoist Discourse over both the propaganda and cultural organs resulted in the language and style of any written word on the war being similar. In "Meijiu xianhua" (Fine Wine and Fresh Flowers) by Xin Ruzhong and Li Chengcai, for example, a brave soldier

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[62]Zuopin, March 1979, p.68.

sends to the nurses who tended to him a letter of gratitude which closes: "I shall certainly defeat the Vietnamese invaders and pledge with my life to protect the construction of the Four Modernizations in the Motherland..."[63] Depiction of the "inevitable defeat of the enemy" was, it should be remembered, one of the principal tenets of the Maoist literary line.

A number of the short stories in the database depict characters from national minorities expressing patriotic sentiments in the language of Maoist Discourse. The two Mongolian shepherds in "Hanlei de xiaosheng" (Tearful Laughter) by Aode Si'er convince themselves that "Chairman Mao and Premier Zhou trust us" and that "the Party Central Committee and the people of the Motherland love us."[64] Struggled against during the Cultural Revolution, the shepherds firmly believe that a sustained patriotic duty to the nation and, more importantly, its organ of power, will see them through their darkest hour. In the concluding "bright tail" to the story, the narrator, a Han Chinese, compounds the views expressed by the shepherds in the following terms:

> The Mongolians are a heroic people! The Mongolians are a hardworking and honest people! For generations they have been patriotic! Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee have always believed in them...[65]

The newly elected production chief in "A Dan de hunshi" (A Dan's Marriage) by Li Wei is a member of the Yi minority and regurgitates official discourse in his inaugural speech. He states that "the Party Central Committee led by Chairman Hua is leading all national minorities to build a

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[63]Renmin wenxue, May 1979, p.79.
[64]Renmin wenxue, September 1979, p.68.
[65]Renmin wenxue, September 1979, p.68.

strong socialist Motherland through the Four Modernizations."[66] In the same story two young men engage in a competition for the right to marry A Dan. It is the final round of the competition, "playing with words", which will decide the result. A Ke creatively compares A Dan's beauty to figures of nature in very florid language. Bi Shan is, however, victorious, for he expresses the Yi minority's gratitude to the CCP for their current prosperity:

> The five-starred red flag dyed with fresh blood is beautiful, for without it there would not be the mountains and rivers of the Sani; the people's communes paved with gold and silver are beautiful, for without then the Sani would not have a happy life; the route of the Long March under rosy clouds is beautiful, for without it the Sani would not be brave or ambitious![67]

Bi plays the game by its "correct" rules. He displays a devotion to the dominance of CCP policies over the national minorities, and couches his devotion in Maoist Discourse. The author acknowledges the "correctness" of Bi's actions by rewarding him with the hand of his heroine in marriage.

These regurgitations of trite political statements seem to compound Li Tuo's earlier quoted view that all writing under Maoist Discourse consisted of "an endless stream of words all signifying the same thing." They also indicate that Maoist Discourse continued to dominate literary creation in 1979. The cynical Western reader may question the validity of including political statements in what is supposed to be creative fiction. The creation of fiction, even in China of the late 1970s, would only be deemed "successful" if it included the heavily weighted political inflections

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[66]Renmin wenxue, September 1979, p.108.
[67]Renmin wenxue, September 1979, p.112. The Yi minority often refers to itself as the Sani.

demanded of it. Success is measured in terms of reception in official critical circles and "publishability" in official journals. If they wanted their works to appear in influential journals such as Renmin wenxue, writers were under "obligation" to submit manuscripts in the style of language that the establishment demanded.

In general, the short stories published in Jintian are devoid of the propaganda and didacticism found in the short stories appearing in the official journals. As they were not bound by the strictures of Maoist Discourse, writers publishing in nonofficial journals were at liberty to widen the aesthetic range of literary discourse. The style and language of the short stories published in Jintian was not, however, as imagistic or symbolic as that of the Hermetic Poetry the journal also carried. This may account for contemporary criticisms of Jintian homing in on poetry rather than fiction. Nevertheless, despite its "intrinsic links" with the more aesthetic style of classical Chinese literary discourse,[68] the language of the Jintian short stories continues to bear the imprint of the times.

The short stories appearing in Jintian are not without their occasional reference to political terms. These expressions, such as "work in a production team" (chadui) and Red Guards (hongweibing), derive more from the terminology of the time than from Maoist Discourse. In "Guilai de moshengren" (The Homecoming Stranger), for example, there are several references to Lanlan's father's plight rendered in language associated with Maoist Discourse: "re-education through labour" (laodong gaizao); "it was

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[68]Li Tuo, "New Vitality," p.70.

all a misjudged case [cuo'an] and he was therefore completely rehabilitated [chedi pingfan]"; and "they announced that he was the enemy of the people [renmin de zuiren]." These references are, however, deliberately chosen by the author to refer to the designation of the father's plight in official texts and/or speeches. Rendering them in this politicized style sets them apart from the remaining language of the short story. It may also indicate that the author is playing with Maoist Discourse by allowing such politically-weighted terms, common in official literature, to appear so out of place in the discourse he is using.

Much of the language of the short stories in Jintian is refreshingly devoid of even purposely engineered "snippets" of the Maoist style. Terms such as CCP, Gang of Four (sirenbang) or even Cultural Revolution (wenhua dageming) are hinted at rather than directly mentioned, even in stories which depict psychological scarring resulting from the Cultural Revolution. Whereas the Maoist line dictated that the temporal setting of a literary work always be clearly indicated, the sociohistorical background to many of the short stories in Jintian is merely alluded to through the context of the action.[69] No policies or political slogans are regurgitated, and none of the usual political leaders (Mao, Zhou Enlai, Hua Guofeng etc.) is mentioned by name. This is perhaps most clearly evident in Wan Zhi's "The Porcelain Figurine" where the figurine of the title is obviously that of Mao, such as every family owned during the Cultural Revolution, but Mao's name is not uttered once during the narrative.

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[69]Pan Yuan and Pan Jie, p.209.

In failing to follow the rules established by the official literary line, the editors of and contributors to Jintian embraced a "policy" - if indeed there ever was a single explicit "policy" for publication - which allowed for a challenge to the inherent values of Maoist Discourse. With a free rein to experiment with discourse, there are a number of language-based stylistic innovations in the short stories in Jintian. There is in "The Porcelain Figurine", for example, an extensive use of onomatopoeia. The opening "words" of the narrative are "dang - pa" - the breaking of the figurine as it hits the ground.[70] This is closely followed by the creaking of a chest of drawers (zhizhi gaga), a child crying (wawa) and a cardboard box dropping on the floor (tong - ka). Such a use of onomatopoeia lends an almost poetic quality to the language. This is reinforced by the consistent and deliberate use of a certain pattern of adjectival/adverbial phrase: distractedly (lengzhengzheng [di]), quiveringly (chanyouyou [di]), careful (xiliuliu [de]), angrily (huchongchong [di]), chilly (lengsousou [de]), ice-cold (liangsousou [de]) and so forth. In "The Porcelain Figurine" Wan Zhi has deliberately fashioned his linguistic choices to provide an almost poetic cadence to his work.

While the fiction of Zhao Zhenkai (published under the pseudonyms Shi Mo and Ai Shan) is not as imagistic as the poetry of his alter-ego Bei Dao, the use of imagery in his writing gives his fiction a unique quality. In "The Homecoming Stranger", for instance, the dreams and reminiscences of Lanlan are rendered in very imagistic language. Lanlan's imagining of the fate of her father in the labour camp consists of a series of unconnected

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[70]Jintian, 2 (26 February 1979), p.39.

images linked together by a single, repeated image, that of the legs of the guard watching over his every move:

> I seemed to be seeing him at rest from arduous labour, sitting exhausted against a mound of earth, rolling himself a cigarette, staring into the distance through the guard's opened legs. He was arduously pulling a small cart along the muddy path. Its wheels creaked as they flung out lumps of black soil. The guard's legs. He was digging the earth one shovelful after the other, throwing it into the trench with great force. The guard's legs. He was holding a lunch tin, greedily drinking the last mouthful of rice gruel. The guard's legs.[71]

The language of a number of short stories in Jintian might be described as menglong inasmuch as images are conveyed in an oblique manner. If menglong is to be apprehended as referring to a state between dreaming and waking, then menglong language is used to describe dreams and memories of the characters. The above passage from "The Homecoming Stranger" comes from Lanlan's own images of what her father may have endured, for she has never actually seen him in the role of a prisoner. This menglong language is typically elliptical and rendered in the present/past continuous tense. The language used by Yi Shu in "French Horn" has been compared favourably to that of Hermetic Poetry, due to its lack of surface action and abundance of obscure imagery.[72] Similarly obscure imagery and elliptical language abounds in "Yuanliang wo, xiongdi" (Forgive Me, Brothers) by Tian Ran.[73] The scant surface action of the narrative concerns bureau chief An Song dozing in his office. By far the lengthiest portion of the narrative, however, describes the recurrent nightmare which plagues An Song's sleeping moments:

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[71]Jintian, 2 (26 February 1979), p.31.
[72]Wedell-Wedellsborg, "Chinese Modernism?" p.116.
[73]Jintian, 4 (20 June 1979), pp.23-30.

> Endless desert. He runs, stumbles, crawls, flies. It is as though he is swimming in the air. And then he falls again, crawling, running... A solitary tree stands on the sand dunes ahead. He runs and runs, but cannot reach the tree. It is just like the ball of thread in the old nursery rhyme, always rolling on and on... Running...(23).
>
> The clear skies are clouding over. Burning hot sand. The snake is slowly tightening its grip around his waist and leg... It hurts - especially his liver... Don't move. Lie down and play dead. Hold on. Hold on. The snake is recoiling its blood-red tongue. The poison hasn't got into his blood (26).

The complex imagery of these dreams refers to An Song's guilt and fear of reprisal from those former colleagues on whom he has informed in his pursuit of an official career. An Song's motives and actions are not, however, referred to directly, but reveal themselves through the imagistic world of his dreams. Such an obscuring of the message put across by the story sets it at odds with the view outlined by Mao in 1942 that the message inherent within literature had to be conveyed in clear, simple language. Tian Ran's decision to portray his message - that An Song regrets his treatment of others in his position as cadre - by means of complex imagery is a challenge to Maoist Discourse.

The role of Wang Meng in the development of a literary form other than Maoist Discourse must also be acknowledged. Wang, who is often cited as the progenitor of the so-called "modernist school" (xiandaipai) in contemporary China, published a number of short stories and novellas during 1979 and 1980 which he himself referred to as a "bundle of hand-grenades" (jishu shouliudan) due to their impact in the literary sphere.[74]

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[74]He Xilai, "Xinling de bodong yu qingtu" (Throbbing and Unburdening the Heart) in Zhu Zhai, ed., Zhongguo xin wenyi daxi (Series on China's New Literature), Beijing: Zhongguo wenlian chuban gongsi, 1986, Vol.II, p.539.

None of these works were published in the journals selected for the database of this study.[75] Wang Meng's various experiments with literary language involved impressions, images and symbols, and touched on what has been described as "lyric reverie".[76] His short stories possess a kind of "multi-hued texture" through which Wang attempts to express the sensations and perceptions of individualized characters. His prose style allows the narrative to take on the "blurred reality" of an impressionist painting.[77] In this respect it shares something in common with the language of Hermetic Poetry. Wang appears to be endorsing the same freedoms to experiment with literary language as the contributors to Jintian.

Wang may be regarded as one of the first official, middle-aged writers in post-Cultural Revolution China to experiment with literary discourse. He also experimented with narrative points of view, and it was a departure from a strictly chronological progression of narrative, rather than use of language, which made Wang Meng the central figure in the discussions of the modernist technique of "stream of consciousness" (yishiliu).[78] Nevertheless, experimentation with language is not the same as challenging an entire literary discourse. Wang's fiction continued to adhere very closely to the realistic ethic of the official literary ideology.

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[75]Among Wang Meng's works were the novellas "Buli" (Bolshevik Salute), Dangdai (Contemporary), No. 3 (September) 1979, pp.4-39 and "Hudie" (Butterfly), Shiyue (October), No.4 (July) 1980, pp.4-37; and the short stories "Youyou cuncao xin" (A Loyal Heart), Shanghai wenxue (Shanghai Literature), September 1979, pp.4-16; "Ye de yan" (Eyes of the Night), Guangming ribao, 21 October 1979; "Chun zhi sheng" (The Sound of Spring), Renmin wenxue, May 1980, pp.10-16.

[76]Philip Williams, "Stylistic Variations in a PRC Writer: Wang Meng's Fiction of the 1979-1980 Cultural Thaw," Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs, No.11 (1984), p.63.

[77]Leo Lee, "Politics of Technique," p.165.

[78]Williams, "Stylistic Variations," p.64.

Despite introducing alternative styles of language for literary creation, Wang Meng's fiction from 1979 (also the early 1980s) failed to offer an alternative ideology or message. The content of the stories was also firmly rooted in the realist mode. The events depicted, without exception, uphold the official CCP view of history. Plots are also structured to reinforce the official line that life is better in the post-Cultural Revolution period. Despite the persecution visited upon Zhong Yicheng in "Buli" (Bolshevik Salute) for almost two decades, in the post-Mao period he is rehabilitated and continues to believe in the dominance of the CCP. The imagery in "Chun zhi sheng" (Voice of Spring) attests to the hope for progress in the "new period" now that the wasted years of campaigns and purges have passed. "Hudie" (Butterfly), which has been described as Wang's "furthest venture away from a chronological narrative structure,"[79] concludes with Zhang Siyuan's return to work in the capital after years of rustication and failed relationships.

It may be somewhat cynical to argue, as Leo Lee has, that Wang's "clever showmanship and claim to modernism are ultimately written in the spirit of socialist realism."[80] Wang's work might best be described as a type of "distinctly Chinese modernism": thematically realist yet tempered by a "psychological structure" (xinli jiegou) akin to Western modernism. In other words, Wang has enriched the Chinese realist fictional narrative with complex psychological probings.[81]

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[79]Williams, "Stylistic Variations," p.65.
[80]Lee, "Beyond Realism," p.69.
[81]Lee, "Beyond Realism," p.69.

4.4 REPRINTING WORKS: "MAOIFICATION" OF LITERARY LANGUAGE

A number of the short stories originally appearing in Jintian were later published in official literary journals. Those published in the early 1980s had the content and language altered so that they conformed with the norms of Maoist Discourse. Some stories were not reprinted until the mid-1980s when Maoist Discourse had already been challenged by official literature and their original language style no longer posed a "threat" to the ideological use of language.

The first official journal to reprint short stories from the nonofficial press was Anhui wenxue (Anhui Literature) in 1980.[82] An introduction to the reprinted works spoke of a "Chinese Writers' Association Constitution" ratified at a meeting in November 1979 at a Beijing hotel. This Constitution urged the Writers' Association to "forge extensive links with all kinds of spontaneous literary organizations and journals" thereby "establishing links of cooperation and selecting writers and works from among them."[83] In support of those young writers who were only able to have their works published in the nonofficial journals, Anhui wenxue took the decision to reprint several works, most of them unchanged from their original form.

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[82]Anhui wenxue, January 1980, pp.32-45, carried a positive introduction to nonofficial literature followed by a reprint of three short stories: Xu Xiao, "Yige nüyushenyuan de zishu" (The Personal Account of a Female Interrogator), Chuhang (Maiden Voyage), April 1979; Wan Zhi, "Xueyu jiaojia zhijian" (In the Mingling Snow and Rain), Jintian, 4 (June 1979); Bo Ping, "Yuehui" (Rendezvous), Wotu (Fertile Earth), 3: 1979; and three poems: Wu Ming, "Chuan" (Boat), Jintian, 5 (September 1979); Mang Ke, "Zihuaxiang" (Self Portrait), Jintian 3 (April 1979); Shu Ting, "Siyue de huanghun" (April Twilight), Jintian 3 (April 1979). The official poetry magazine Shikan (Poetry) also published a number of hermetic poems originally published in Jintian throughout 1979 and 1980.

[83]Anhui wenxue, January 1980, p.41.

The clearest example of the changes imposed upon the diction of short stories reprinted in official journals is Tian Ran's "Juhui" (The Get-Together). There were a number of minor changes to stylistic elements when the story was reprinted by Beijing wenyi (Beijing Literature and Art) in February 1980. Also the unspecified date of the original has a definite temporal setting in the reprinted version, setting the evils of rustication clearly within the realm of the Cultural Revolution. More importantly, however, the concluding paragraphs of the story have been completely altered to set the story within a specific historical context and to provide a happy ending. The addition of a "bright tail" to the story points to the importance of structure, as well as style, to the form of Maoist Discourse. An analysis of the two versions of the story shows how the language of the nonofficial press has to be politicized (or "Maoified") to render it "acceptable" for mass consumption.

The time-frame of the Jintian version is clearly after the fall of the Gang of Four: "Before I knew it, it was already 1978... She [Qiu Xia] died the year after they allowed us to enter ourselves freely for the university entrance exams."[84] Qiu Xia's suicide, which results from her inability to come to terms with the hopelessness of her plight, originally occurred in the post-Mao period. The time-frame of the Beijing wenyi version is clearly set before October 1976. The letter inviting the rusticated youths to the get-together is dated September 1975, whereas the original had been undated. Secondly, the conclusion clearly states: "It was the very last day of September 1976. Those four criminals condemned by history would fall

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[84]Jintian, 6 (December 1979), p.75.

from power in but a few days."[85] Having Qiu Xia's suicide moved from the post-Cultural Revolution period to the period when the Gang of Four were in power is an obvious attempt to blame the Gang for her death. If, as the official line maintained, life was more hopeful in the post-Cultural Revolution period, Qiu's death in this period would be harder to justify.

The weather imagery in both versions of the story uses similar grey skies and raindrops which are compared to the teardrops of the narrator: "There were raindrops on the grass on the grave mound. They were like teardrops. It was as if they were grieving" (Jintian). "The brightly coloured flowers were covered in rain. They were like teardrops. It was as if they were grieving" (Beijing wenyi).[86] However, the tone of the two endings is different. The ending of the Jintian version refers to the narrator's unsuccessful attempt to straighten Qiu Xia's gravestone: "Somehow the gravestone with her name carved on it was crooked. I wanted to straighten it, but even after exerting all my strength, I still couldn't get the damp gravestone to move an inch..."[87] The Beijing wenyi version alludes to the hope of a new society which is promised after the end of the Cultural Revolution, again through weather imagery:

> Through the rain-misted peaks of the Taihang Mountains, on the distant horizon, amidst the rustle of the cold autumn winds, a splash of pale blue promising vitality spanned the mountain tops. "It will pass! If the sky is already clearing over there, it won't be so long

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[85]Beijing wenyi, February 1980. Quoted from Hei meigui (Black Rose), Changchun: Shidai wenyi chubanshe, 1986, p.559.

[86]This scene and the language used to describe it are highly reminiscent of the closing section of Lu Xun's 1919 short story "Yao" (Medicine). The two mothers who tend to the adjacent graves of their sons in the cold spring winds are moved to tears when they notice the brightly coloured flowers which have mysteriously appeared on one of the graves. (Lu Xun, Nahan [Battle Cry], Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1988, p.28).

[87]Jintian, 6 (December 1979), p.75.

for us," I said. Xiao Lan looked at me in silence. She said nothing. With a genuine yearning [she] was gazing at the blue sky...[88]

Changes in language were not restricted to the reprinting of works from nonofficial journals in official journals. Rudolf Wagner outlines the revisions made to Jiang Zilong's "Qiao changzhang shangrenji" (Manager Qiao Assumes Office) when it was reprinted in Gongren ribao (Workers' Daily) on 25 August 1979.[89] This substantially revised version was apparently altered by the author himself. It offers an insight into the craft of Chinese fiction and, more importantly, the different levels of political sensibility associated with media of differing distribution patterns. In other words, the language of the narrative was changed to suit the audience at which the journal in which it appeared was aimed. Renmin wenxue mostly reaches members of the political class with a higher educational level, while Gongren ribao is a mass-circulation newspaper addressed to workers at large.

The revisions in the story may be outlined as follows. All generalized critical remarks about the CCP have been expunged improving its status substantially. For example, in the Renmin wenxue version, Qiao Guangpu announces to the committee: "I want to take Shi Gan along; he will go as the secretary of the Party Committee and I as the director of the factory." In the Gongren ribao version, Qiao's proposition is not so forthright and may only be viable following the approval of the Party: "I propose that I may go with Shi Gan, he becoming the Party secretary and I the director,

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[88]Hei meigui, p.559.
[89]Wagner, p.421.

I would ask the Party Committee to deliberate and decide on this."[90] Qiao's language is reined in to meet the requirement that the management structure should be seen as acting under the leadership of the factory's CCP committee. Secondly, the acute descriptions of Qiao Guangpu's facial features have been softened. Initial description of Qiao as having the "boorish" (cuguang) countenance of a hunter and eyes like a "hungry tiger" (e'hu) have been expunged from the latter text. The depiction of Qiao's management style as "iron fisted" (tie quan) has been replaced by "painstaking" (xinxue). Thirdly, the Chinese working class is enhanced by the removal from the plot of the German engineer whose diligence was to be emulated by the workers in Qiao's factory. Any description of the indolence of the workers has also been removed. Fourthly, the love interest in the story has been toned down and "purified". For example, when Qiao and Tong have their photograph taken, it is not as a couple but in a group of tourists. Finally, any harsh criticism of either the CCP or the innovations of Qiao Guangpu have also been muted.[91]

Whether Jiang Zilong revised his text on his own volition or on the advice of the editorial board of Workers' Daily, not only the political implications of his story, but also their manifestations in the plot - i.e. speech and appearance of characters - were subjected to change. This suggests that Jiang was possibly very conscious of the "social effects" (shehui xiaoguo) of his literature on its audience. More importantly, however, Jiang was eager not to anger any of his supporters in the "reformist faction" at the Party Centre. Indeed there were a number of

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[90]Quoted from Wagner, p.421.
[91]Wagner, p.422.

criticisms of "Manager Qiao Assumes Office" in the literary columns of Tianjin ribao (Tianjin Daily) in early September.[92] These criticisms appear to have been written in response to the Renmin ribao version of the story. When the story was printed in an anthology of Jiang's works in 1980, the language had returned, by and large, to that of the original text.[93] A preface to the anthology by the establishment literary critic Chen Huangmei doubtless proved that Jiang could rely on the support of the literary authorities.

4.5 IMAGERY: USES OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Although there is a varied application of figurative language in the short stories in the database, there are a number of images which recur in several works. The diction used in the short stories in Renmin wenxue and Zuopin is subordinated to Maoist Discourse. Do the same politicized conventions dominate the figurative language used? The diction used in the short stories in Jintian has been described as "imagistic". Do the same aesthetic conventions dominate the figurative language used? What are the functions of and differences in the use of imagery in the official and nonofficial journals under review?

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[92]See especially, Zhao Ke, "Ping xiaoshuo 'Qiao Changzhang shangren ji" (On the Story "Manager Qiao Assumes Office"), Tianjin ribao (Tianjin Daily), 12 September 1979.

[93]See Jiang Zilong, Jiang Zilong duanpian xiaoshuoji (A Collection of Jiang Zilong's Short Stories), Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1980.

4.5.1 Images of weather and natural phenomena.

Alluding to the inner emotions of characters through descriptions of weather and natural phenomena is a common literary practice. Images of weather and natural phenomena in Chinese literature of the Maoist era usually refer to the sociopolitical climate, which in itself affects the psychological state of characters. Many of the novels and short stories written in the 1950s and early 1960s depict pre-1949 society as veiled in threatening rain clouds or shivering in the depths of winter, and post-1949 society as perpetual summer with crops thriving and the sun shining.[94] Such simplistic imagery was the norm for "socialist realism" which stifled imaginative experimentation, representing the "bourgeois capitalist" society as an age of darkness and emphasizing the felicities of life in a socialist society.[95] This political inflection on images of nature is still very much in evidence in the short stories published in official literary journals in 1979. The "cold winter" of the Cultural Revolution is often portrayed as having given way to the "warm spring" of the "new period".

In "I Love Every Green Leaf", for example, the promise of better things to come in the post-Cultural Revolution era is alluded to in the seasonal

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[94]See for example: Jun Qing, "Liming de hebian" (The Riverbank at Dawn), Jiefangjun wenyi (PLA Literature and Art), February 1955, in which the struggle against the KMT is conducted in the pouring night rain and the soldiers cross the river to victory as dawn breaks; Wu Qiang, Hongri (Red Sun), Beijing: Zhongguo qingnian chubanshe, 1957, in which the struggle against the KMT is conducted in the piercingly cold winter wind yet the victorious red flag is raised on the mountain-top in bright sunlight; Luo Guangbin and Yang Yiyan, Hongyan (Red Crag), Beijing: Zhongguo qingnian chubanshe, 1961, in which the PLA "liberates" Chongqing just as the underground workers break from the darkness of KMT prison into the bright sunlight.

[95]Baldick, pp.206-7; Abrams, p.176.

changes which conclude the action: "I saw the icicles hanging under the eaves melting in the sunshine. Drops of water were dripping one by one into the edge of the steps with a rhythmic sound..."[96] Similarly Chen Guokai's "Wo yinggai zenme ban?" (What Should I Do?) depicts the main character's hopes for the future following the overthrowing of the Gang of Four: "now that the black clouds have passed by, the sky will soon be brighter."[97]

Weather imagery is also used to refer to the inner disposition of main characters. In "Sunday" by Miao Ge, a 40-year old mother contemplates the fate of her Gang-following husband, who has been imprisoned and whom she never loved, and the chances of her 17-year old daughter successfully joining the Youth League.[98] Since the husband was arrested and taken away, the room has been bathed in sunlight. The brightness of this sunlight is depicted as having intensified due to the political atmosphere being propagated by Hua Guofeng and his leadership. The sun shines even more brightly, however, when the daughter is accepted into the Youth League.

Zou Zhi'an's "Tudi" (Land) alludes to the frustrations of Li Jinke, the newly appointed secretary of Xinzhuang Commune, as he becomes aware of the difficulties of his post.[99] When Li arrives at the commune, he is very unsure as to what to do, and this is reflected by the misty grey drizzle which veils the action. Later, as Li's problems are gradually solved, the

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[96]Renmin wenxue, June 1979, p.107.
[97]Zuopin, February 1979, p.50.
[98]Renmin wenxue, July 1979, pp.88-93.
[99]Renmin wenxue, June 1979, pp.12-24.

weather becomes "fine and bright" (tiankuo rili). Eventually, as Li finds his feet in the atmosphere following the CCP's Third Plenum and its associated policies, the skies are a deep blue and the crops are sprouting. Just as the CCP propagated the view that, now the "pernicious influence" of the Gang of Four was being eradicated, the political climate was hopeful, imagery in officially sanctioned short stories upheld the vision of a "glorious future".

Images of nature in the short stories published in Jintian do not refer to the sociopolitical background of the action. Enjoying greater freedom to experiment with imagery beyond the hackneyed codes of Maoist Discourse, the natural images used by the contributors to Jintian raised their short stories from the didactic expression of official literature. Images of nature are perhaps most fully developed in "Yuanhao" (French Horn) by Yi Shu.[100] The action is set at night and is further shrouded in an omnipresent diaphanous veil which obscures the narrator's view. He is unable to make out his "lover"'s face among the haze of cigarette smoke in the restaurant where they meet. As "the hues of night quickly envelop the mysterious twilight," her face is further obscured.[101] Finally, the branches of a willow tree cover her face like a veil as they begin to communicate. These natural phenomena almost act as barriers between the narrator and the woman with whom he is to share a sexual union.

The most commonly recurring image in the story is that of the sea. The sea stands as a symbol of a number of concepts within the narrative.

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[100]Jintian, 5 (September 1979), pp.49-53.
[101]Jintian, 5 (September 1979), p.49.

Firstly, the narrator's partner refers to the nocturnal city as an ocean drowned in darkness, the lights of buildings shining like the lamps of fishing boats. Secondly, the narrator equates the park - with its many young couples making love - to a sinking ship. The love-making couples, or "those people closing in on death," are "still enjoying the pleasures of life" rather than sensing the imminent danger of the ship sinking.[102] Thirdly, in response to her question whether he likes the small islands in the sea, the narrator perceives his partner in terms of a series of natural images:

> Perhaps she is the ocean at the cusp between night and day. She is an isolated island in the sea. She is the blue moon... the lascivious night mist, a sly night bird...[103]

The continual references to Debussy's orchestral suite "La Mer" (The Sea), in which the French horn heralds daybreak over the sea are more significant. The narrator initially encountered his partner at a concert where this piece of music was played, and his developing relationship with her (such as it is) always returns to the music as a point of reference. As they make love her expression becomes illuminated by the moonlight and her eyes resemble the "sprightly flow of the music" of the French horn. The image of the French horn symbolizes the approaching dawn, a realm of light in which rationality and desire complement each other.[104] The major stumbling block within the psyche of the narrator is his inability to come to terms with his intellectual stifling of sexual desire. The passage in Debussy's suite played by the French horn indicates the possibility of

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[102]Jintian, 5 (September 1979), p.49.
[103]Jintian, 5 (September 1979), p.52.
[104]Posborg, p.315.

reconciling the rationality and desire within him, for the music, a man-made interpretation of nature, can be interpreted as a bridge between sexuality and rationality.[105] If the sea is a symbol of nature's manifestation of libido, then music is a symbol of culture's manifestation of human sensuality.[106]

"French Horn" details the unsuccessful attempt of the narrator to cope with his sexual desire, both in relating to his partner and in the intellectual facet of his being. He is fearful of his sexual desire as he is unable to control it rationally. This sexual desire is compared to the tidal motion of the sea - natural and yet uncontrollable. At the moment of intercourse, he sees his partner as a fisherman, arms flailing wildly, sinking beneath the surface of the water, totally consumed by sexual gratification.

4.5.2 Images of light and dark.

Images of light and dark are consistently used in post-1949 Chinese literature in the form of political allegory. Embracing explicit slogans and utilizing abstract didacticism, all political forces deemed revolutionary are portrayed in images of light (i.e. the brightness of socialism) and those deemed reactionary are portrayed in images of darkness. Such black and white imagery serves as further proof of the inability of language and style to develop under Maoist Discourse. It is also quite common in a number of the short stories published in official journals in 1979.

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[105]Wedell-Wedellsborg, "Chinese Modernism?" p.118.
[106]Posborg, p.315.

In "Wode diyige laoshi" (My First Teacher) by Ma Shitu, for instance, a bright aura is seen to glow around the head of the eponymous teacher, as he is to be executed by the KMT.[107] This imagery refers quite obviously to political "goodness" in the dark society prior to 1949. Similarly, in "Zai xique daqiao de shihou" (When Magpies Build Their Bridge) by Xiao Jiao, the narrator, recalling her childhood in the Cultural Revolution when she was raised by her uncle, perceives her uncle's imminent arrest in terms of light and dark. She recalls: "One night I noticed the dark shadow of a car set off against the trees outside my window. I noticed the lamplight coming from Uncle's room."[108] The car, presumably driven by those sent to arrest the uncle, is in darkness as it represents "evil". The uncle's room is bathed in lamplight as he represents benevolence.

When it is set against darkness light is also symbolic of hope. In Wang Yugu's "Ailü" (The Lovers) the twinkling stars in the black sky above the darkened home of the violinist and his insane girlfriend allude to a faint glimmer of hope for the future.[109] This promise remains unfulfilled, however, for the young couple are arrested and disappear without trace during the conclusion of the story. The lighthouse illuminating the night sky in Wang Jiabin's "Shuipingjiao" (Horizon Reef) is doubly symbolic.[110] Firstly, it is symbolic of hope: the writer Liu Shuishan has upheld revolutionary integrity despite persecution during the Cultural Revolution, and will eventually see his novel published. Secondly, it is symbolic of

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[107]Renmin wenxue, March 1979, pp.69-75.
[108]Renmin wenxue, October 1979, p.53.
[109]Zuopin, October 1979, pp.40-46.
[110]Renmin wenxue, April 1979, pp.83-93.

love: Liu's girlfriend now works in the lighthouse and the "darkness" of his existence is illuminated by the "light" of her love.

In the short stories published in Jintian, images of light and dark refer to something more profound than political benevolence or malevolence. In Wan Zhi's "Cixiang" (The Porcelain Figurine) Jiajia perceives his father Sun Yuan as a "black shadow" (hei yingzi).[111] Since the death of his wife, Sun Yuan has failed to communicate on a personal level with his son, leaving Jiajia totally alienated from the only person capable of loving him. Furthermore, Sun Yuan has been denounced by the authorities and the psychological torment on Jiajia, who cannot really understand the situation, increases the feelings of resentment he has towards his "horrible Dad". This resentment leads Jiajia to perceive his father in negative (i.e. dark) terms. This imagery is accentuated further in comparison with the central symbol of the story: a white porcelain figurine of Chairman Mao.

In Shi Mo's "The Homecoming Stranger",[112] when Lanlan first encounters her father, who has returned home after two decades as a political prisoner, he is standing in darkness. This further obscures her vision of the person she holds responsible for her own suffering:

> The corridor was dark. The light shining from the kitchen split the darkness in two. He... stood in the darkness on the other side. Mum was at his side. Behind them the light from the television screen was flickering (23).

The father's standing in the darkness may be interpreted on two levels. Firstly, it emphasizes Lanlan's negative image of him. Not only does she

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[111]Jintian, 2 (26 February 1979), p.42.
[112]Jintian, 2 (26 February 1979), p.23.

blame him for the physical and mental torment which has shaped her, but she has, primarily to save herself from further pain, come to deny his existence. The mother, on the other hand, as the parent who has always stood by and cared for Lanlan, stands in the light. Secondly, the father has always stood in the shadows, as he is now, bringing an influence to bear on Lanlan's life.

Wan Zhi's "Xueyu jiaojia zhijian" (In the Mingling Snow and Rain) abounds in images of light and dark.[113] The faint light of the streetlamp above the bus-stop where the narrator encounters a young girl, and the bright lights of the oncoming traffic are set against the pitch blackness of the night. This light indicates that hope, love and trust continue to exist within a darkened society which fosters distrust. The main tenet of the story is that in society there is someone with whom we can all communicate on an intimate level. The nature of society causes people to abandon this search for shared trust and love. Society is impersonal, symbolized by the darkness of the night and the severity of the weather. Conversely, darkness allows a certain anonymity which fosters the coming together of independent souls:

> The dark night causes people to remain at home. It gives people a warm nest, love and happiness... (75).
>
> The dark night makes people wary of each other. They go about with bolted and locked doors, tightly closed windows and eyes open wide. But it also enables people to trust each other, through breathing, with the heart and with sparkling eyes. Even on this evening in the mingling snow and rain we don't know each other and are complete strangers (76).

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[113] Jintian, 4 (20 June 1979), pp.74-76.

This achievement of trust would be impossible in the daylight, a rational sphere where everyone exists within a closed world, shielded by self-imposed alienation. Although the narrator feels secure within the light and warmth of his own home, he is aware that he should brave the night elements in order to seek out human companionship.

The ex-KMT officer in "Open Ground" searches the building site for the bones of his deceased comrades-in-arms on a night with no moonlight. The darkness of the night and the openness of the ground increase the paranoia felt by the officer as he executes a task which has not been sanctioned. The lights of a passing goods train further intensify this paranoia: "The snow-bright lights of the engine cut open the dark atmosphere like a sharp sword, stabbing him straight in the eyes, his gigantic shadow cast on the open ground."[114] Later, once the officer has reburied the corpses of his deceased comrades, a sense of calmness descends as "the moon started to rise and silvery white ripples appeared on the surface of the river."[115]

4.5.3 Images of trauma: scars and ruins.

The physical and mental traumas resulting from the Cultural Revolution exerted long-term effects on the psychology of the Chinese people. This trauma is commonly alluded to in post-Cultural Revolution fiction through imagery of scars. As Arthur Kleinman writes, this trauma has left its mark

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[114]Jintian, 5 (September 1979), p.56.
[115]Jintian, 5 (September 1979), p.57.

and this "mark is more like a wound than a blemish."[116] Imagery of scars is closely linked to "literature of the scars". Not only were these short stories dominated by images of scarred survivors, but the scar was also a common leitmotif and an allegory of pain and suffering.

A common use of the scar image in the short stories under review is to allude to invisible mental scars deep within the psyche by describing visible physical scars. In Zhang Xian's "Jiyi" (Memory), for example, the scar on the forehead of wronged projectionist Fang Liru represents the torment of more than a decade of persecution by unsympathetic cadres.[117] The eponymous heroine of Cao Hongxiang's "Fang Weizhong de libairi" (Fang Weizhong's Sunday) has scars on her finger following months of writing the character "loyalty" (zhong) in blood every Sunday.[118] Fang's self-inflicted injuries indicate a sense of inadequacy and worthlessness which constitute her psyche. The inadequacy and worthlessness both result from Fang's experiences in the Cultural Revolution. The shame brought upon Fang by her parents' persecution leads her to self-imposed rustication and marriage to a peasant, an act which is undertaken to "purify" her spirit. Fang perceives the regular beating she receives from her husband and her weekly self-mutilation as retribution for her badness.

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[116]Kleinman, p.183. Although such a viewpoint was not explicit in officially sanctioned literature, Kleinman attributes the depiction of scars in literature to something deeper than political expediency: "The concrete reenactment of traumatic experience and the powerful need to narratize it in a compelling fashion to others may be a general, not necessarily pathological (even perhaps at times therapeutic) tendency of those who have undergone severe personal trauma, especially when that experience is shared by so many others that it has taken on a culture-wide meaning" (226).

[117]Renmin wenxue, March 1979, pp.13-19.

[118]Zuopin May 1979, pp.10-15. The name Weizhong actually translates as "defending loyalty".

Self-inflicted injury to prove revolutionary loyalty is a common theme in late 1970s Chinese fiction. In Liu Xinwu's "Xinglaiba, didi" (Wake Up, Brother), Peng Xiaolei has a scar on his chest resulting from his pinning his Mao badge directly onto his flesh to prove his loyalty when his father is persecuted.[119] Party secretary Yang Zhao in "Shangba kaojujia" (Textual Researcher of Scars) by Mao Zhicheng has a scar on her arm where she was burnt by sulphuric acid by a Red Guard leader some ten years earlier.[120] This scar is not indicative of a trauma deep within Yang, rather it points to the trauma on the part of the younger generation who were motivated to inflict such injuries in the name of the revolution. The irony is that the former Red Guard who scarred Yang Zhao is now a teacher who has been beaten by the son of a cadre and finds himself as powerless to seek redress as Yang was when tortured by him.

A number of short stories allude directly to the internal scarring of victims of the Cultural Revolution. In these cases the image of the scar appears as something of a hackneyed symbol of suffering, where any allusions to trauma are made through those deeper, invisible scars that characters presume to exist within other characters, yet without any visible manifestation. The narrator of Han Shaogong's "Yuelan" (Yuelan) feels a sense of responsibility in exacerbating the tragedy of Yuelan, who eventually commits suicide to save her family from spending their hard-earned savings on medical treatment for her tumours.[121] This sense of responsibility extends to Yuelan's son Haiyazi, who has not only lost his

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[119]Zhongguo qingnian (China Youth), No.2 (11 October) 1978, pp.34-41.

[120]Zuopin, November 1979, pp.8-13.

[121]Renmin wenxue, April 1979, pp.30-37.

mother but also the funds for education. The narrator comments: "I knew I wouldn't be able to erase the scar on Haiyazi's tender, young soul" (37).

In Kong Jiesheng's "Turbulent Youth", a story bemoaning the way in which so many lost the innocence of youth during the Cultural Revolution, the narrator says of his old classmate Liu Xiaoming, whose parents perished at the hands of Red Guards: "Such a beautiful girl with such a wonderful youthfulness about her, yet she has a heart which has been deeply scarred."[122] Similarly, the young girl commenting on her rusticated colleague in "Xue wang xinli liu" (Blood Flows into the Heart) by Jiang Zilong claims: "[He is] hurt in the heart. It's a mental wound. Blood flows into the heart yet it will never heal. It will always cause pain."[123] The narrator of Zhuang Dongxian's "Huannan zhizhong" (In Adversity) comments on two young sisters forced to fend for themselves during the Cultural Revolution in the following terms: "Who could possibly imagine what kind of scars were left on the souls of these two young girls due to a succession of heftier and heftier blows?"[124]

There are similar images of scars in the short stories appearing in Jintian. The scar on the cheek of He Lusheng in Cui Yan's "Lukou" (Intersection) is indicative of the suffering he has endured during the Cultural Revolution following his mother's suicide, his father's persecution and his own rustication.[125] He Lusheng's suffering is not, as many stories in the official journals pretend, the direct result of the Gang of Four or

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[122]Zuopin, January 1979, p.17.
[123]Renmin wenxue, September 1979, p.30.
[124]Zuopin, June 1979, p.12.
[125]Jintian, 2 (26 February 1979), pp.33-38.

the cruelty of Gang-following cadres. It is more his being forced to exist on the margins of society, the realm of prostitutes and petty criminals over which politics had no direct influence, which has resulted in his being scarred both mentally (i.e. the result of rejection) and physically (i.e. the knife-wound he sustained in a street brawl).

Images of scars are not the only figures of trauma in the short stories of 1979. A number of short stories published in Jintian seek to parallel the "ruined" mental state of Chinese society with the "ruined" physical state of buildings (and other inanimate objects). Such imagery is not apparent in short stories published in Renmin wenxue or Zuopin, although short stories such as "Xueran de zaochen" (Blood-Dyed Morning) by Lü Lei allude to the damage to buildings resulting from Red Guard violence.[126] The prominence of ruins imagery in some of the short stories in Jintian has led to critics in Taiwan and Hong Kong comparing these stories to the trend of Trümmer-literatur in post-War Germany, heralding them as a Chinese "ruins literature" (feixu wenxue).[127] These two literary trends explore individual suffering as a result of dominant political systems - the Nazi war machine and the leadership clique during the Cultural Revolution - and ascribe psychological trauma to something deeper than the arrogation of political power by inhuman regimes. The literature published in post-War Germany and post-Cultural Revolution China both sought to come to terms with the nation's suffering as the two societies strove to recover from spiritual and sociopolitical collapse. Another comparison may be seen to exist with regard

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[126]Zuopin, May 1979, pp.3-9.

[127]Wu Mang, "Feixushang de huhuan" (Calls from the Ruins), Zhongbao yuekan (Zhongbao Monthly), June 1980, pp.92-96.

to the treatment of writers. At the time of Germany's Third Reich many authors were forced into silence or driven into exile just as many of China's authors were rusticated and forbidden to publish for much of the Cultural Revolution.[128]

Heinrich Böll (1917-1985) was probably the leading writer of Trümmer-literatur. The closing article in the first issue of Jintian was a translation of Böll's 1952 essay "Bekenntnis zur Trümmerliteratur" (Confessions on Ruins Literature).[129] The Chinese "ruins" stories were not necessarily written in response to Böll's essay. It was more the case that Böll's ideas coincided with the literary credo of Jintian's editorial board which prompted them to carry the article. In his essay Böll reminded his contemporaries that the writer should uphold philanthropy and incorruptibility. He scorned the tradition of European literature for not representing the true face of society. The contributors to Jintian likewise disapproved of socialist realism for allowing only the "black flower" of hypocrisy to bloom in the Chinese literary garden.[130] Böll questions whether the writer should blindly paint an idyllic picture of society in compliance with literary policy. The editors of Jintian replied in the negative, their publication of the essay upholding Böll's concluding comment:

> It is our task to remind people that man does not exist merely to be administered - and that destruction in our world is neither of the external kind nor so trivial in nature than one can presume it to be healed in a few years.[131]

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[128]Gilbert Waterhouse, A Short History of German Literature, London: Methuen, 1959, p.152.

[129]The original appears in Heinrich Böll, Essayistische Scriften und Reden, Vol.1, Köln, 1979, pp.32-38; it was translated as "Tan feixu wenxue," Jintian, 1 (23 December 1978), pp.61-67.

[130]JPRS, No. 74909, 11 January 1980, p.21.

[131]Böll, p.35.

Böll wrote that the characters populating his stories were depicted as living among the ruins of society and having all been scarred in a similar fashion. In describing characters, Böll points out, the most important factor is that character's experience rather than what the reader views externally. The description of Professor Wang Qi in Shi Mo's (Zhao Zhenkai) "Zai feixushang" (On the Ruins) is created along these lines.[132] This short story is the most often cited example of Chinese "ruins literature" and was the first short story ever to be published in Jintian. Superficially, the story depicts Wang roaming the detritus of the Yuanmingyuan the day before a struggle-meeting which will decide his fate. Wang's piecemeal memories which enlighten the reader as to his state of mind are, however, more important. The ruins of the Yuanmingyuan represent a symbol on two levels. Firstly, their erosion by the elements symbolizes the mental erosion of intellectuals like Wang during political campaigns such as the Cultural Revolution. Secondly, they stand as symbolic proof of the unending process of history. Given that Wang can contribute to this unending process by virtue of the books he has written as a historian, his life serves no apparent purpose. This realization of the insignificance of the individual pushes Wang into contemplating suicide - a move he fails to fulfil.[133]

Images of ruins may be found in a number of short stories published in Jintian during 1979. The central symbol in Shu Ting's "Jiaotangli de qinsheng" (The Piano in the Church) is the church which has "already

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[132]Jintian, 1 (23 December 1978), pp.3-10.
[133]Wedell-Wedellsborg, "Chinese Modernism?" p.111.

become ruins".[134] The stained-glass windows of the church were smashed and broken by Red Guards. This brings the destruction depicted in the story within the historical context of the Cultural Revolution. It stands, however, for a more profound destruction of beliefs in society. This is supported by a more pervading religious symbolism within the story which implies that God - or something spiritual - provides the answer to healing the nation's wounds, rather than the CCP.

"Open Ground" by Wan Zhi is also notable for its images of ruins.[135] The action describes an ex-KMT officer who roams through a nocturnal building site which was once the battlefield where his comrades lost their lives in the 1940s, and under which are buried their corpses. The building site is still lined by pillboxes dating from the Civil War. These pillboxes, through thirty years of exposure to the elements, are covered in moss and are described as resembling graves. A more concrete representation of death are the bones of his buried comrades-in-arms which surface during the day's digging. These bones are the past, but "the past is death" and "death is his own memory."[136]

A sub-genre of German Trümmerliteratur was Heimkehrerliteratur ("homecomer literature") which dealt with characters returning from prisoner-of-war camps to a society with new ethical values.[137] The

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[134]Jintian, 5 (September 1979), p.14.
[135]Jintian, 5 (September 1979), pp.55-58.
[136]Jintian, 5 (September 1979), p.55.
[137]Wolfgang Borchert (1921-1947), especially his celebrated drama "Draußen vor der Tür" (Outside the Door), is perhaps the best known proponent of Heimkehrerliteratur. Borchert's drama depicts Beckmann, a former prisoner-of-war, who returns from Siberian captivity to wartorn Hamburg and finds his wife with another man, his parents dead by suicide

"homecoming" of exonerated intellectuals and cadres from two decades of incarceration was an important theme in Chinese "ruins literature". Whereas "ruins literature" tends to use images of ruined buildings to refer to the ruins of society, "homecomer literature" depicts the ruination visited upon individual psyches in images of scars very similar to those in stories published in official journals.

Focusing on the consequences of traumatic stress of father and daughter, in "The Homecoming Stranger" Shi Mo diagnoses the cause of both parties' psychological deprivation over the preceding two decades. Heimkehrerliteratur is usually concerned with the psychology of the returnee, "The Homecoming Stranger", however, places more emphasis on the psychology of the daughter of the returnee. The author examines Lanlan's sufferings through her first-person narrative. Her life experience is arguably the central concern of the narrative, while her father's experience is alluded to in his external actions.[138]

There are a number of figures of trauma in "The Homecoming Stranger". Lanlan likens the profound pain at having to encounter her father after two decades of being encouraged to deny his existence to "the stitches over an old wound splitting and breaking one by one."[139] The image conveys the

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and his former colonel flourishing. When his attempt to kill himself by drowning fails, Beckmann discovers that God is an old man who weeps at his inability to help.

[138]In many respects Böll's short story "Mein Onkel Fred" (My Uncle Fred, 1951) is structured along similar lines. The narrative is also recounted not from the point of view of the returnee, but by the first-person narrative of a younger member of the family to which he returns - in this case Fred's teenage nephew. (Qiu-Hua Hu, p.74).

[139]Jintian, 2 (26 February 1979), pp.21-31.

impression that Lanlan's wound has never actually healed. This is the result of having internalized her feelings, confiding in nobody, and protecting herself with an instinctive shield pretending egoism and coldness. Imprisoned within this shield, Lanlan has convinced herself that she is the only one wounded, the only one who has suffered. Eventually, however, Lanlan realizes that her father is just as much a victim as she is. This is the key initiating the father-daughter reconciliation process. While "The Homecoming Stranger" alludes to the healing of psychological wounds, its overall tone does not promise the rosy future referred to in the "bright tails" of official literature. This apparently conforms to Böll's view that such traumas cannot "be healed in a few years."[140]

When Lanlan encounters her father, he no longer appears as the Arab sheikh riding on an elephant of her memories, but is a wizened old man, physically and mentally broken by his experience. The old man covered in blood tied to a rocking horse in the cellar, which is a part of the scene in which Lanlan's memory blurs into dream, stands as a symbol of her father's suffering. This is later confirmed in another dream when an image of her father becomes the old man in the cellar. That this one image (based as it is on reality) should recur in Lanlan's dreams points to its pivotal role in her psyche. As Anne Thurston has written, the "most poignant expressions of fear," especially the fear of a traumatic experience recurring, are to be found in dreams and nightmares.[141]

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[140]Böll, p.35.
[141]Thurston, p.14.

4.5.4 Barriers and bridges.

Cultural Revolution society was marked by an absence of truth and distortion of facts. There was an inevitable loss of stability among human relationships, especially when people were encouraged to deceive and inform on each other. A resultant mood of distrust pervaded society. Individuals were therefore forced to internalize all feelings and to confide in nobody for fear of recrimination. In order to address this issue, the editorial board of Jintian propagated the view that "literature should serve as a vehicle to express people's feelings, as a bridge between souls, and as a means of purifying people's natures..."[142] Short stories exploring this theme tended to use a variety of images, symbols and metaphors alluding to the barriers separating individuals and the necessity of breaching those barriers by establishing bridges.

Both Lanlan and her father in "The Homecoming Stranger" have internalized their feelings and fail to communicate the causes of their suffering. Lanlan has protected herself with an instinctive shield pretending egoism and coldness. Imprisoned within this shield, Lanlan has convinced herself that she is the only one who has suffered: "All these years selfishness has become an instinct, a method of self-defence... a

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[142]Pan Yuan and Pan Jie, p.195. Jintian's call to "purify" people's natures suggests a didactic intent, whereby writers were to encourage their readers to view society more in terms of the individual. Such "purification" amounted to the substitution of political criteria with something more subjective and personal. Advocation of the "self" in literature must be interpreted as an ideological stand, for it was fundamentally at odds with the ideological tenets embodied by Maoist Discourse.

kind of pleasure, a wall to defend against others."[143] Lanlan refuses to communicate with her father when he returns home physically and mentally broken by his imprisonment. Following his homecoming, the entire family engage in a charade of artificiality, refusing to face what the father has endured, unwilling to reveal their thoughts. Any trace of estrangement within the family, especially between father and daughter, is locked deep within the psyche. Lanlan is convinced that she is the only one who ponders on the experience of the past two decades. Lanlan's failure to communicate her feelings marks her own complicity in eluding the truth.

The father also blames himself, rather than the system, for what has happened to his daughter. He is the one who initiates the process of father-daughter reconciliation. Initially he views Lanlan's boyfriend Jianping as a "sturdy and reliable bridge" between himself and Lanlan. Later he invites Lanlan for a walk in the park in order to apologize for his role in her suffering. Seeing the row of poplar trees, which had been newly planted when father and daughter last visited the park some twenty years earlier, Lanlan perceives them as the barrier which has kept herself and her father estranged: "these small trees rapidly grew and stretched, forming enormous, insurmountable railings, indicated by twenty irregular growth rings."[144] When it eventually transpires that her father has survived the labour-camp simply to fulfil his twenty year-old promise of taking Lanlan on the boating lake, her barriers of alienation crumble. The truth of her father's suffering, hitherto concealed by the family's tacit forbearance, coupled with twenty years of unfailing love, convince Lanlan

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[143]Jintian, 2 (26 February 1979), p.27.
[144]Jintian, 2 (26 February 1979), p.31.

of the rightness of their relationship. She realizes that the souls of two people suffering are more likely to be kindred spirits, especially those people who have been existing in cultural alienation or, as Lanlan puts it, "a place outside people's imagination."[145]

"Qiang" (The Wall) by Tie Bing is constructed around a single motif: the wall.[146] This motif is both real and imagined. Firstly, it is the high wall surrounding the narrator's childhood home, "protecting" the privileged cadres within it from the realities of life outside it. When the narrator first comes to live with her cadre uncle, the wall in the garden is broken, allowing the next-door neighbour Yu Zhiqiang, the son of a factory worker, to climb in and steal dates. Although the narrator - and more especially her cousin - berate Yu for stealing, the narrator's uncle, somewhat patronizingly, suggests that they should show friendship towards "the small friend from a worker's family."[147]

In the narrated present of the story (the post-Mao period), the old wall has been replaced by a new red wall. The reinforcing of the wall merely exacerbates the rift existing between rich and poor. This brings into play the second, imagined presence of the wall in the story. It is a mental barrier between two social classes: the cadres, represented by the narrator, and the workers, alluded to in the fate of Yu Zhiqiang. The two families are brought together, so to speak, by a wedding on either side of the wall. The narrator's cousin has built an elegant house with extravagant

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[145]Jintian, 2 (26 February 1979), p.31.
[146]Jintian, 4 (20 June 1979), pp.17-21.
[147]Jintian, 4 (20 June 1979), p.19.

extras to celebrate his marriage. Yu's determination to build a house for his brother and sister-in-law against the wishes of the neighbourhood committee results in his quarrelling with and killing a neighbour. The hypocrisy inherent within the official moral code, which results from the barrier separating the rulers from the ruled - a metaphor also for Zhongnanhai in its red-walled compound - is further enforced by Yu being tried for murder by the narrator's cousin, now a judge.

On a less definite level, "In the Mingling Snow and Rain" alludes to the achievement of a metaphorical bridge between the narrator and the young girl at the bus-stop. A simple act of random kindness, the offering of an umbrella to protect against the rain, is reciprocated when the young girl offers the narrator a lift in a colleague's truck. In "French Horn" figures of nature have been employed to allude to barriers between the young man and his lover: twilight mists, darkness and willow branches (see 4.5.1). A barrier also exists within the young man as he fails to establish "communication" between the sensual and rational facets of his being.[148] However, as a cultural manifestation of human sensuality, the music of the French Horn acts as a bridge erected between desire and rationality. If the young man had crossed this bridge mentally, then he would be able to fulfil himself sexually without feelings of shame and guilt. Barriers are, however, not always able to be breached.

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[148]Wedell-Wedellsborg, "Chinese Modernism?" p.119.

4.6 CONCLUSIONS

The political demands on literary discourse in the official sphere remained unyielding in 1979. The dominance of Maoist Discourse ensured that, for the most part, the stories published in Renmin wenxue and Zuopin exhibited no noticeable change in structure and use of language when compared to the literature of the first three decades of the PRC. Any variances which may occur, must be apprehended in accordance with variances in the official CCP line. For example, the cadres and intellectuals designated "capitalist roaders", and therefore negative characters, in Cultural Revolution fiction, have now became "heroes". Likewise, the idealized exemplars who upheld the political line during the Cultural Revolution have now become "enemies". Such variances represent changes in political inflection rather than challenges to the discourse structure itself. Although Wellek and Warren have warned against the determining of the style of a specific period from the style of a group of works,[149] the influence of Maoist Discourse requires that the language used in the short stories published in official journals consists of similar regurgitations of political dicta.

The style of language used in the short stories in Jintian marked the first sustained experimentation with literary language since the imposition of Maoist Discourse in the 1940s. Although the breaking down of the strictures of Maoist Discourse did not become widespread in official literature until the mid-1980s, the experimentation in stylistics conducted

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[149]Wellek and Warren, p.182.

by the writers contributing to Jintian has to be acknowledged as at least partially influential. There therefore exists quite a noticeable difference in the nature and quality of language between the official and nonofficial modes of publication. Although the post-Mao era provided the opportunity for renewed attention to style of language, stylistic experimentation had not, by and large, commenced in fiction published by official journals in 1979. The major exception to this was the fiction of Wang Meng. Despite repeated attempts at developing a more aesthetic style of language, Wang's fiction continued to be created with political criteria in mind. In this respect his experiments, although praiseworthy, merely chiselled at the surface of Maoist Discourse.

The use of figurative language in the short stories tends to be less clearly defined. That imagery of scars should be apparent in works in both official and nonofficial journals is unsurprising when one considers the damaging effect of the Cultural Revolution on all areas of Chinese society. Similarly, the use of imagery pertaining to natural phenomena and light/dark is common to many literatures. There are, nonetheless, differences in the way this imagery is used in the official and nonofficial journals. The short stories in Renmin wenxue and Zuopin employ images to make political points, for example, darkness/bad weather refers to any concept politically negative and light/good weather to any concept politically positive. The imagery in the short stories in Jintian generally refers to something deeper and more individual. This seems to reinforce the view that literature created outside the restrictive boundaries of politically-weighted discourse achieves a greater and more varied aesthetic depth than that created within those boundaries.

Chapter Five:

Narrative Structure

5.1 FORM AND STRUCTURE

"Form" is one of the most frequently used terms in literary criticism and implies a diversity of meanings. It may refer to a distinct literary type or genre (as in the "short story form"), or to an established pattern of poetic metre or, more generally, to the structure or unifying principle of design in a given work.[1] The term "form" has descended from the Latin word forma, which refers to the "central critical concept" within a literary work. As M.H. Abrams writes, critics vary greatly in their definition of "form":

> All agree that "form" is not simply a fixed container, like a bottle, into which the "content" or "subject matter" of a work is poured; but beyond this, the definition of form varies according to a critic's particular assumptions and theoretical orientation.[2]

Perception of literary form has undergone change through the centuries. Neoclassic critics of the 1700s perceived the form of a narrative as a combination of components which fit together in accordance with the principles of decorum.[3] Following the rise of Romanticism in the early 19th century, critics contrasted the "mechanic form", which is imposed on a work as a predetermined design, with the "organic form", which evolves from within the work itself.

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[1]Baldick, p.86.
[2]Abrams, p.72.
[3]Decorum, derived from Horace's Ars Poetica (c.20BC), refers to the appropriateness by which certain styles, characters, forms and actions in literary works are deemed suited to one another within a hierarchical model of culture bound by class distinctions. (Baldick, p.53).

In the 1940s American New Critics began using the term "structure" almost interchangeably with the term "form". Narrative structure referred to an "equilibrium" or "interaction" of words and images within a narrative which constituted a "totality of meanings".[4] When they spoke of the formal properties of a literary work, these critics inferred a discussion of that work's structural design and patterning.[5] If the "form" and "structure" may be considered synonymous, is it possible to define each term separately?

R.S. Crane, a prominent critic of the Chicago School in the 1950s, distinguishes between "form" and "structure". The form of a literary work is its inherent "emotional power" which functions as its "shaping principle". Form, in turn, synthesizes the "structure" of the work into "a beautiful and effective whole of a determinate kind".[6] The structure of a literary narrative, according to this application, consists of the ordering and rendering of that narrative's component parts. In Crane's terminology, "form" is a more superior force than "structure" which determines the shape of all the structural elements within narrative.

The manner in which a literary narrative is structured is closely linked to the arrangement of its plot. Plot is more than a sequence of events. It is the deliberate ordering and organizing of the story by the author to

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[4]Abrams, p.72.
[5]Baldick, p.86.
[6]R.S. Crane, The Languages of Criticism and the Structure of Poetry, 1953, quoted in Abrams, p.72. The Chicago critics emphasized the larger structures of literary works, following the example of Aristotle, whom they admired for basing his Poetics on actual examples rather than on preconceptions. Their interest in plot and in the design of a work as a whole distinguishes them from the New Critics. (Baldick, pp.34-5).

achieve a specific structure. As early as the 4th century BC, in Aristotle's Poetics, plot (or mythos) was seen as the key to narrative structure.[7] Aristotle's definition of plot is similar to Crane's definition of form: it is a governing principle of development and coherence to which all other elements are subordinated.

For the purposes of this study, the term "structure" will be employed to refer to the methods an author utilizes to organize his or her narrative. Particular emphasis will be placed upon narrative structure from the angle of plot arrangement: the chronology of narrative - the temporal ordering of plot encompassing concepts such as flashback (analepsis) and disjunction; the juxtaposition of plot-elements; and the sectional dividing of plot into chapters (or similar methods of plot division).

Another important factor to bear in mind is the ideological consequence of structuration. There may be more significant influences behind structuration than arranging a narrative to elicit interest within the reader.[8] The case of China in the late 1970s is especially convincing, for all official literature continued to be created under the rigid ideology of Maoist Discourse. The previous chapter argued that Maoist Discourse dictated the language and style of literature. The structure of a narrative depends not so much upon the subject matter it carries, but more on how that subject matter is organized and conveyed to the reader. Were literary

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[7]Abrams, p.161.

[8]Baldick has written than an author arranges plot to emphasize the relationship between incidents in a manner which interests the reader. That interest is commonly surprise or suspense. An older term for the plot of a play or story, or at least for its most complicated portion, is intrigue, which alludes to an element of suspense (p.171).

works structured so as to uphold the authoritarian line of Maoist Discourse? Did a departure from this line via experimentation with narrative structure represent potential ideological subversion? An analysis of narrative structure in the short stories under review should provide answers to these questions.

5.2 CONTINUITY OF TRADITIONAL NARRATIVE FORMS: THE STORYTELLER'S MANNER

Storytelling has always played an important role in the Chinese literary tradition. It grew in popularity following urbanization during the Song dynasty when itinerant storytellers would entertain the "new urban middle class" by recounting tales in the colloquial language.[9] The pinghua and the huaben, two literary forms popular during the Ming dynasty, continued the storytelling tradition. The pinghua were "popular tales" rendered in the vernacular which married written history and oral narrative into what has been termed "an uneasy combination".[10] The uneasiness of this marriage of forms was highlighted by placing dynastic history on an equal footing with legend and folklore, and by copying from other works. The interpretation of huaben as "storytelling scripts" has recently been challenged, the term itself being adopted as the regular form for the genre only in the 20th century. Huaben may be seen as "true" vernacular fiction rather than

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[9]Idema, p.xvii. Earlier examples of "storytelling" can be found in the bianwen of the Tang dynasty, which retold classical, commonly Buddhist, tales via prose and metrical verse.

[10]Patrick Hanan, The Chinese Vernacular Story, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981, p.20.

"fictionalized history". They are often rendered in a more classical language than the pinghua and provided models for the later novel.[11]

The structure of Chinese pre-modern vernacular fiction, including the novels of the Ming and Qing periods, was commonly presided over by the "simulated context" of the storyteller addressing an audience.[12] This simulated narrative stance was not adopted to convince the reader that the text derived from oral sources, it was more a case that the "situational context" of storytelling had became a stylistic norm.[13] This narratorial device served two main purposes. Firstly, through the narratorial intrusions of the storyteller, the author was able to impose his or her value judgements on events so that the reader could appreciate a "correct" reading of the text.[14] Secondly, the direct communication between raconteur and audience increased the authenticity of the text, thereby attesting to the verisimilitude of events recounted.[15]

The storyteller context remained the fundamental narratorial device of Chinese vernacular fiction until at least the late Qing period.[16] In the late

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[11]Hanan, p.9

[12]Hanan, p.20.

[13]David Teh-wei Wang, "Storytelling Context in Chinese Fiction: A Preliminary Examination of It as a Mode of Narrative Discourse," Tamkang Review, Vol.XV, 1-4, 1984-85, p.139.

[14]Zhao, p.43.

[15]David Wang, "Storytelling," p.136. Wang continues by stating that "the storytelling context tends to render the illusion of authenticity in a text by externalizing and spatializing the sense of immediacy and plenitude..."

[16]Patrick Hanan has written that "all Chinese vernacular fiction appears to make some use of the narrative model of professional oral fiction. No matter how great the divergences from the model... they never exceeded a certain point..." (p.20). Likewise David Wang speaks of the "simulated context of storytelling" as the "fundamental discursive law" in pre-modern Chinese narrative. ("Storytelling," p.142).

Ming dynasty, the popularity of nihuaben, fiction written in "imitation" of the huaben, ensured the continued usage of the storyteller's rhetoric. Feng Menglong's (1574-1646) Gujin xiaoshuo (Ancient and Modern Tales) and Ling Mengchu's (1580-1644) Pai'an jingqi (Pounding on the Table in Surprise) consisted of a number of short fictional works many of which were rendered in the storyteller's manner.[17] By the late 19th century the storyteller's rhetoric could be found in the gong'an ("detective") stories which appeared in chapbooks, and many works originally part of the storyteller's repertoire were rewritten in the form of novels.[18]

The storyteller's manner was also used in a number of stories in the first decade of the 20th century. Li Boyuan's (1867-1907) Wenming xiaoshi (A Brief History of Enlightenment, 1906) may be unusual for its unitary (as opposed to episodic) structure, but is still rendered by a storyteller addressing the audience.[19] Wu Woyao's (1866-1910) Ershinian mudu zhi guai xianzhuang (Strange Phenomena Viewed over Twenty Years, 1908) is narrated by a storyteller who transcribes events and anecdotes occurring in late Qing officialdom and structures them into a textual whole.

As the storyteller's manner is an important structuring device in a number of the 1979 short stories under review - exclusively those published in official journals - its function with regard to structuration is worthy of analysis. Much of pre-modern Chinese fiction is recounted by an

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[17]For more on the nihuaben see Xu Shuyi and Hu Shiming, eds., Gudai baihua xiaoshuo xuan (An Anthology of Classical Vernacular Fiction), Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1985.

[18]Idema, p.xx.

[19]Birch, p.386.

omniscient narrator who remains implicit during the course of the narrative. Usually the narrator does not need to introduce him or herself in the story being told. When the narrator moves towards self-introduction as the teller of the tale, his or her role as the storyteller (shuohuade or shuoshude) may be seen to begin. The storyteller is therefore most commonly "an explicit narrator talking to his public and the character of his story, rationalizing and moralizing."[20] The storyteller is rarely individualized, and remains as anonymous and impersonal as the audience he or she addresses.

The storyteller is the narrator of the story. He or she is the one who tells, or is assumed to be telling, the story in a given narrative. He or she is neither the real nor the implied author of the narrative for that privilege is reserved for the "person" behind the overall design of the work, i.e. the force originally responsible for selecting the storyteller's style. Although the storyteller's narrative is related in the third person, he or she adopts the first-person form when addressing the reader. In this respect the storyteller engages in overt narration, for his or her presence is marked explicitly through direct communication to a narratee about the setting, or to make commentaries.[21] The storyteller never allows him or herself to participate in the story being recounted.

The reader (or listener in the original context), as the interlocutor of the narrator, is the narratee of the storyteller. A distinction should be drawn between the narratee and the implied reader. The former is a figure imagined within the text as listening to the narrator, while the latter refers

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[20]Idema, p.24.
[21]Chatman, p.219.

to the hypothetical figure of the reader to whom a given work is designed to address itself. The interlocutor of the storyteller narrator is established within the text itself rather than at the (implied) author - (implied) reader level. Seymour Chatman has also pointed out that in the oral tradition the narratee of a text is the audience of the storyteller - whether that audience be the single reader or the assembled audience.[22]

The storyteller is an intrusive narrator. He or she not only reports but also comments on and evaluates the actions and motives of the characters. He or she is also an omniscient narrator whose commentaries on the text may take a number of forms: interpretation of the text either in general terms (as in personal views on human life as a whole) or in judgemental terms (as in an evaluation of the morality of characters and events), and commentary on the discourse (i.e. interruptions by the narrator on the state of the text).[23] The storyteller's rhetoric has been summarized by Patrick Hanan in the following terms:

> The effects of this narratorial content are everywhere to be seen - in explicit reference to the story being told, in simulated questions asked of the audience, in simulated dialogue with the audience, in the sharp demarcation of the various modes, and even in the relative uniformity of style from work to work.[24]

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[22]Chatman, p.253. Baldick makes clear the difference between the implied reader and the narratee (p.208), and also points out that the "narratee is a notional figure within the 'space' of the text itself, and is thus not to be confused either with the real reader or with the implied reader" (p.145).

[23]Chatman, pp.237-48. Chatman sums up his discussion thus: "Commentary, since it is gratuitous, conveys the overt narrator's voice more distinctly than any feature short of self-mention." (p.228).

[24]Hanan, p.20.

The commentary may be found at various intervals throughout the story. It is employed to heighten suspense, raise questions in the mind of the reader, and, most importantly, to offer moral evaluation. The storyteller is created to share the audience's moral values so that his or her moral stance is more readily accepted.[25] In this way the commentary of the storyteller is seen as accurate and reliable. The reliability of this narration should be understood in the light of the prevailing mood and/or political stance of the time. In upholding this stance, the storyteller is certainly biassed. This bias may impair the objective reliability of his or her narration. Nonetheless, the storyteller seeks to perceive, interpret and evaluate his or her narration in accordance with the opinions and norms which the author and reader may reasonably be expected to share.[26]

In the fiction of the May Fourth period, the narrator "emerged from his long centuries of impersonality,"[27] first-person narration became common, and the structure defined by the storyteller-narrator declined in usage. Following Mao Zedong's "Yan'an Talks" of 1942, the storyteller's manner again became prevalent in a number of literary works. Mao urged writers to emulate the language of folk and oral tradition in creating literature. Although the vernacular fiction of the Ming and Qing dynasties was based on the oral tradition, it was, in essence, designed to be read by those with at least a basic degree of literacy.[28] Much post-Yan'an literature continued to be based on this tradition, but was rendered in a language, style and structure more readily accessible to those poorly educated. The

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[25]Birch, p.386.
[26]Abrams, p.168.
[27]Zhao, p.62.
[28]Hegel, "Making the Past," p.201.

storyteller's rhetoric not only continued an age-old literary form, thereby fulfilling the criteria of "making the past serve the present" (gu wei jin yong), but also ensured that the narrative was governed by a "voice" capable of interpreting that action in whichever way suited the political line of the day. The clear-cut value judgements of the storyteller-narrator were able to ensure the propagation of a "correct" message.[29] Zhao Shuli (1906-1970), the popular author of the 1940s and 1950s, whose fiction has been described as "genuinely close to popular storytelling,"[30] exploited this narrative mode to full effect.

Mao's advocation of a utilitarian literature rooted in oral tradition had ideological motives. There was arguably no better device to reinforce the "correct" interpretation of events in a work of fiction than the storyteller communicating directly with the reader. It has to be said, however, that the use of storyteller rhetoric to structure the plot of a number of short stories under review in this study appears to be stylistically rather than ideologically oriented. While the storyteller-narrator remains in control of the narration, and through arrangement of the events narrated is able to cast that narration in a "politically correct" light, his or her instrusions into the text appear more as narratorial commentary.

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[29]Zhao, p.262.

[30]Milena Doleželová-Velingerová, "Understanding Chinese Fiction 1900-1949," A Selective Guide to Chinese Literature 1900-1949: Volume I: The Novel, Leiden: Brill, 1988, p.39. See especially Zhao Shuli's "Li Youcai banhua" (Li Youcai's Storytelling, 1946) or "Dengji" (Registration, 1950). One might also mention Kong Jue and Yuan Jing's Xin ernü yingxiong zhuan (Lives of New Heroes and Heroines) which derives its title from Wen Kang's Qing dynasty novel Ernü yingxiong zhuan (Lives of Heroes and Heroines).

The storyteller in pre-modern fiction communicated directly with the audience through a number of recurrent phrases: "the story goes..." (huashuo), "let's tell..." (qieshuo), "but the story goes..." (queshuo) and so forth. Similarly, in a number of the short stories from 1979, the narrator handles changes in scene or emphasis with modern equivalents of these clichés. In "Lanlan de mulanxi" (Blue Magnolia Brook) by Ye Weilin, narration of a radio broadcaster's relationship with a power station worker is punctuated with intrusive comments in the storyteller mode: "Let's get on with the story" (rang women jiangxia ba) (47); "Okay then, let's get on with the story" (haoba, rang women jixu jiang) (50); "Let's talk about Xiao Zhijun" (women lai jiangjiang Xiao Zhijun) (52); "Let's bring our tale to a close at this point" (women jiu jiangdao zheli ba) (58) and so forth.[31] These intrusive comments do not appear to serve a didactic purpose. Likewise the narrator of Yu Lin's "Guoji beige" (International Elegy) introduces background information on the main character - a wrongly detained political prisoner - with the following comments: "While his own thoughts are occupied by the task before him, let's simply recount [rang women jiandandi shuxu yixia] what happened seven years ago."[32] Later, the narrator returns the reader to the narrated present by saying: "Let our story return once again [haishi rang womende gushi zai huidao] to 21 January 1975" (53). By referring to "our story", the distance between narrator and narratee is shortened so that the latter may feel a sense of participation in the former's arrangement of plot events. This type of storyteller rhetoric guides the reader through any temporal or spatial change which is introduced into the narrative.

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[31]Renmin wenxue, June 1979, pp.47-58.
[32]Renmin wenxue, February 1979, p.49.

Narratorial comments on the text may also touch upon self-reflexivity. A self-reflexive text will incorporate into its narration reference to the process of composition. Open reflection within a narrative on its own process of composition is frequently found in modern works of fiction which repeatedly refer to their own fictional status.[33] The narrator in such works is referred to as self-conscious. The self-conscious narrator shatters any illusion that he or she is telling something that has actually happened by revealing to the reader that the narration is a work of art, or by flaunting the discrepancies between its patent fictionality and the reality it seems to represent.[34] Self-conscious narration points to a sense of "playfulness" on the part of the narrator. The narratorial comments of the storyteller in much PRC fiction, although recalling the jocularity of pre-modern oral tales, appear, however, as much more of a laboured technique.

The storyteller of both pre-modern and 20th century Chinese fiction is, on occasion, self-conscious.[35] "Ti weiding de gushi" (A Story as yet Untitled) by Shu Qun, published in Renmin wenxue in 1979, is narrated by a reporter - formerly Party Secretary Li - who visits an ironworks to learn about the Four Modernizations. The narrator often comments that his tale is fictional, for example: "Now I'm ready to write the editorial and the report.

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[33]Baldick, p.201. Although self-reflexivity is more common in modern fiction, there are earlier equivalents such as Laurence Sterne's Tristram Shandy (1759-67).

[34]Abrams, p.168. Contemporary critics tend to use the term "meta-fiction" in reference to fiction that openly comments on its own fictional status. However, the term is usually reserved for works that involve "a significant degree of self-consciousness about themselves as fictions, in ways that go beyond occasional apologetic addresses to the reader." (Baldick, p.133).

[35]The most notable example would be Li Yu's (1611-1680) Rouputuan (The Carnal Prayer Mat). See Patrick Hanan's translation, New York: Ballantire, 1990.

Of course, I could also use the material for a piece of fiction. Now, what should it be called? Why not tentatively call it 'A Story as yet Untitled'?"[36] Such self-consciousness comes across not as playful asides to the reader but as lumpen. The reporter's comments fail to resemble the storyteller addressing an audience. They are not rendered in the form of natural remarks punctuating the text but appear as hurriedly attached justifications for using material gathered for a newspaper report in the guise of fiction. This justification is further evidenced by the subtitle attached to the short story: "The oral account of an old comrade-in-arms".

In striking contrast, the narrator of Peng Xiong's "Honghuaxi panshang de xiju" (Comedy on the Banks of Red Flower River), which tells of Pan Yutao choosing a suitor, openly delights in playing with the reader about the fictionality of the narrative.[37] After describing Pan Yutao as a child, the narrator comments:

> What does she look like now? The reader will certainly ask me to describe her. I'm very sorry but I can't. This is because, ladies and gentlemen [gewei], you're bound to be disappointed if I use ten-a-penny descriptions like "bright and beautiful eyes" or "rosy cheeks". And if I were to give you a realistic and meticulous description of a girl like her, then I'm afraid that those critics who wear lemon-coloured glasses will be down on me like a ton of bricks. You see, they turn everything "yellow" [i.e. pornographic]. (29)

Later, as Yutao's future suitor is introduced, the narrator teases:

> But who was this person? Ladies and gentlemen, please don't worry, for you'll find out soon enough. However, there is something I ought to explain at this point, just in case you get the wrong end of the stick. Pan Yutao is not the sort of person to think of technicians or other intellectuals as "Stinky Old Ninths". No way! (30)[38]

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[36]Renmin wenxue, February 1979, p.90.
[37]Zuopin, September 1979, pp.29-30.
[38]"Stinky Old Ninths" (choulaojiu) was a derogatory epithet applied to

The self-conscious asides of this narrator share much in common with the playfulness of the storyteller in pre-modern literature.

In some of the stories the storyteller's manner appears in the form of comments on the state of affairs in the plot or on his or her handling of the narrative. The narrator of "Zhanshi tongguo leiqu" (Soldiers Crossing the Minefield) by Zhang Tianmin, for instance, raises doubts on the part of the reader as to the veracity of the story by saying: "Was it really like this? Alas, I couldn't say for certain. But I've heard it was."[39] Likewise, the narrator of "Sanjin yaliao" (Thrice into the Duck Coop) by Liang Guangdao punctuates his narrative thus: "At this point it's probably a good idea to add something to this narration... But it's up to you whether you believe it or not..."[40] These uses of the storyteller's manner are interesting in that they fail to uphold the storyteller's comments as representative of an "official truth". The narrator's authority and the verisimilitude of his narration are called into question. The reader is given the choice to believe the events depicted or to dismiss them as fabrication. This suggests that the strongly closure-oriented Maoist style is slightly disrupted. Nevertheless, both stories conclude with "bright tails" praising the political policies of the post-Cultural Revolution regime. This ensures that, whether or not the readers choose to concur with the narrator's uncertainty about the accuracy of the events narrated, the closing frame leaves them in no doubt as to the message imparted by the story as a whole.

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intellectuals during the Cultural Revolution.

[39]Renmin wenxue, July 1979, p.27.

[40]Zuopin, August 1979, p.32.

The traditional storyteller's form included a prologue and an epilogue, generally addressed to the assembled audience, which framed the main narrative. In the huaben the prologue, which was known as the ruhua (literally: "entering words"), appeared at the beginning of virtually every text. The ruhua was sometimes in the form of poetry and sometimes prose. It was used by the storyteller before he or she began the story proper in order to welcome the audience, to set the scene or to captivate the listeners. On occasion the ruhua was a simple and well-known piece of poetry which was recounted to allow the audience to gather before the performer started on the main tale.[41]

In the Ming and Qing dynasties, the vernacular novel was often preceded by a prologue known as the yinzi. The use of the prologue was not, however, obligatory. Its purpose, like the ruhua, was to introduce the main text. When the renowned literary critic Jin Shengtan (1608-1661) revised The Water Margin, he merged the yinzi with the first chapter of the novel and described it as the xiezi (literally: wedge). Jin defined the xiezi as "something which gives rise to something else" (yi wu chu wu), in other words, the prologue "gives rise to" the main text.[42] The nature of the xiezi rendered the division between the prologue and the main narrative somewhat indistinct. The epilogue generally consisted of a narratorial comment accompanied by a brief poem which, in most cases, was placed within the last chapter of the narrative.[43]

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[41]Idema, p.39.
[42]Cihai (1979), p.1485.
[43]Milena Doleželová-Velingerová, ed., The Chinese Novel at the Turn of the Century, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980, p.60.

The use of prologues consistent with the storyteller's rhetoric can be found only in a handful of short stories in the database. While most of the examples again point to the stylistic function of this narratological technique, on occasion, the prologue is used to reinforce the narrator's authority. An authoritative narrator, that is, one who can vouch for the authenticity of and has complete control over the events recounted, is better suited to carrying a specific message. The reader is more likely to act upon the message delivered by an authoritative narrator than by an "uneasy" narrator.[44]

The narrator of Chen Minfan's "Qiyi de mingling" (Strange Orders), which is about a military commander leading the army to open up farmland in Northeastern China shortly after the Communist victory, leaves no doubt about his authority. He begins his narrative with an introductory paragraph on the origins of the story:

> This is a true story. The protagonist of the story, an elderly military commander, would doubtless wave his hand and say on hearing the story: "This never happened. It's total fabrication." But I dare say that if only he took time out from his busy schedule and listened carefully to my story, he would be able to add even more interesting details to the tale... Then he would be able to prove that the story I am about to tell you is absolutely true.[45]

While the military commander may be too modest to acknowledge his participation in the plot, the narrator is eager to inform his readers that the events depicted in the narrative are historically accurate. The actions of the military commander may be seen as representative of the positive

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[44]Henry Zhao describes an "uneasy" narrator as one who is unable to handle the various problems of narrating as he lacks "an interpretative system to guide the narrative." (p.4).

[45]Renmin wenxue, July 1979, p.78.

image of PLA officers propagated by the official interpretation of history. Historiography, and more significantly historicity, are important concerns underlying Chinese fiction. Factual evidence and fictional episodes are often woven together to elicit reader speculation on the meaning of the events depicted. Different readings of history can be produced by various permutations of narrative order.[46] Moreover, relating fiction "in terms of a certain historical context seems to help a writer justify his text's reliability and authority - even if the fiction being narrated may be pure fantasy."[47]

Storyteller-style epilogues are used to greater effect in the short stories under review. They are generally used to consolidate and reiterate the salient ideas depicted in the main narrative. For instance, "Shizhi xiaoshuo" (A Trial Story) by Zu Wei concerns Bureau Chief Wang and his wife who acquire trial products - such as a stereo television and an electric iron - in order to show off to their neighbours. The story concludes in embarrassment as the couple's son is arrested for stealing a purse on a bus. The narration draws to a close with the narrator explaining his reasons for recounting the story:

> Does this sort of thing still go on today? Or does it still happen as often? Readers, please write and tell me. However, before I receive any readers' letters, I would like to write a trial story and, if it is published, let's see whether Bureau Chief Wang and his wife Li Yunchang, who both like buying trial products, like my trial story.[48]

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[46]David Wang, Fictional Realism, p.44. These comments are made with specific reference to Mao Dun's novels Shi (Eclipse, 1927) and Hong (Rainbow, 1930).

[47]David Wang, Fictional Realism, p.29.

[48]Zuopin, November 1979, p.28.

The narrator's request for readers' letters commenting on malpractice among officials should not be taken at face value. He is merely focusing the readers' thoughts on the events depicted in the story in a specific direction. The moral values of the storyteller-narrator are commonly those held by the intended reader. In "A Trial Story", Zu Wei engages in irony by having his narrator unite with the reader on moral grounds at the expense of the characters. The storyteller-style epilogue reinforces the message that Bureau Chief Wang and his wife are being subjected to ridicule.

The addition of a storyteller-style epilogue to a short story can also serve to strengthen the ideological message inherent in the narrative. In this respect, the epilogue shares a similar function with the "bright tail" (guangming weiba) which was formulaically added to "literature of the scars". The author, through the guise of a storyteller-narrator, uses the epilogue to ensure that the reader has interpreted the events of the story "correctly". Explicit historical or ideological contexts are imposed upon the narrative to guarantee that its message remains "politically correct".

The narrator of Lin Daren's "'Geming geci chuangzuofa'" ("How to Write Revolutionary Lyrics") concludes his tale: "This story was to have finished here. But there are a number of readers who will still want to know how Qian Yiping wrote his self-criticism."[49] Qian Yiping's self-criticism is not important in plot terms, but its substance is important in ideological terms. Qian's superior has reprimanded him for writing a book advising on the

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[49]Renmin wenxue, June 1979, p.68.

creation of "revolutionary lyrics" while at the same time successfully publishing a song created according to the book's guidelines. The story is structured so that reader expresses sympathy with Qian's plight and feels anger towards his superior. Qian's failure to put pen to paper for three days results from his inability to understand what he has done wrong, and further increases reader sympathy. This act emphasizes Qian's function as a positive role model and his superior as a negative image. Introducing the self-criticism in this way merely reinforces its importance in interpreting the story. Furthermore, the narrator conveniently remembers an apposite passage from Marx and Engel's Communist Manifesto which is quoted to highlight the righteousness of Qian's actions.

Wang Zengqi's "Qibing liezhuan" (Biographies of Cavalrymen) concludes with a storyteller-style epilogue commenting on the writing of the narrative.[50] The storyteller-narrator's role here has been as a collator and editor - recounting tales originally told to him by several ex-cavalrymen about people and events during the Anti-Japanese War in Inner Mongolia. In his final comments, which are addressed directly to his audience, the narrator sets his narrative in a specific historical context:

> I visited these old comrades in 1974. This story is about looking back - but at the time it would have been impossible to write such a story. Because my reminiscing even now is still stagnating in the past, the tone I used [in the story] was of that time. The "now" in

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[50]Renmin wenxue, November 1979, pp.70-77. Wang Zengqi, born in 1920, was a student of Shen Congwen in the 1940s. The publication of his influential short story "Shoujie" (The Initiation) in October 1980 proved to the Chinese readership that "someone writing in baihuawen could do so as gracefully and elegantly as the masters of prose had done in classical Chinese." Wang's highly lyrical style was, in its own way, a challenge to Maoist Discourse, and influenced a large number of younger writers to explore the "beauty and possibilities of the Chinese language." (Li Tuo, "New Vitality," p.71).

> the story really should be changed to "at that time". I didn't have the time to make the necessary corrections, so I just left it as it was. (77)

By explaining that the accounts of the ex-cavalrymen were originally related to him before the end of the Cultural Revolution, the narrator sets their disatisfaction with political policy in a very specific frame of reference. Their disatisfaction is directed towards the political regime of the Cultural Revolution, rather than the one in power in the storyteller's narrating now (i.e. 1979). The epilogue continues by portraying the ex-cavalrymen's happier disposition in the post-Cultural Revolution period:

> Now - and this "now" is the real now - the problems faced by these old comrades have been satisfactorily dealt with. They have once again returned to their posts... Let's hope that they will continue to live in peace. Let's hope that they will never have to endure political campaigns of that like again. (77)

There does not appear to be any evidence of the storyteller's manner in the short stories published in Jintian in 1979. There are a number of reasons which may explain this. Firstly, the writers contributing to Jintian and the editorial board which decided the stories to be published both emphasized experimentation and a breaking with the styles and forms of both pre-modern and post-Yan'an Chinese literature. As the storyteller's manner was such an integral part of both literatures, it is not surprising that these experimental writers should choose not to use it in their work. A number of stories are recounted by a first-person narrator, but at no time does that narrator address his or her audience directly in the storyteller's manner. The first-person narrator was used to effect the portrayal of characters' thought processes. This narrative consciousness is carried by the character rather than the narrator. Any narratorial

intrusions in the manner of the storyteller would destroy the verisimilar effect of this form of narration. A similar situation occurred in May Fourth fiction which also lacked narratorial directions explaining away violations of what had been the narrative norm.[51]

Secondly, foreign literature, especially that available in unofficially circulated translations during the Cultural Revolution, exerted its influence over the writers contributing to Jintian. The journal's editorial board felt that although China's traditional culture was something of which the nation could feel proud, contemporary literature needed to absorb elements of foreign culture to rejuvenate it. In order to depict accurately the nature of the new literary era, the flagging cultural traditions would have to be re-evaluated through a transfusion of foreign literary blood.[52] The short stories published in Jintian in 1979, created under the partial influence of Western contemporary literature, are more innovative than the short stories published in the official journals which continued to adhere closely to the norms of pre-modern vernacular fiction.

5.3 TALES WITHIN TALES: THE EMBEDDED NARRATIVE

A frame narrative is a story in which another story is embedded - the tale-within-a-tale as it is commonly termed - or which contains several such embedded tales. It is a narrative structure in which the main action is relayed at second hand through an enclosing frame story.[53] In its earliest

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[51]Zhao, p.98.
[52]Pan Yuan and Pan Jie, p.204.
[53]Baldick, p.37.

applications in the West, the frame narrative was a preliminary narrative which introduced one or more characters who then proceeded to recount a series of short stories.[54] Although it is arguably the embedded narrative which provides more interest for the reader than the frame narrative of which it is a part, Seymour Chatman rightly points out that "no matter how minimal or extensive the frame story may be... it forms a narrative in its own right, with its own laws of events, discourse and so on."[55]

The technique of narration enclosed within narration was not uncommon in pre-modern Chinese fiction. The asides and intrusive comments of the storyteller-narrator should not, however, be considered as indicative of a frame story. As Henry Zhao has argued, the storyteller was "omnipresent in almost every work" and his or her comments could not be considered an independent narrative in themselves.[56] In a framed narrative the writer purports to being only the "transcriber" of the text and as such "provides a mimetic illusion by assuming the pose of a transparent intermediary."[57] These stories usually took the form of one narrator for both the frame narrative and the embedded narrative. However, the embedded narrative could also be narrated by characters established in the frame story. The characters narrated those past events essential to the reader's understanding of the plot and also addressed their fellow characters as part of the main narrative.[58] Lu Xun's "Kuangren riji" (Diary of a

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[54]Abrams, p.195. Early non-Chinese examples of the frame narrative included The Arabian Nights, Boccaccio's Decameron (1353) and Chaucer's Canterbury Tales (1387).
[55]Chatman, p.255.
[56]Zhao, p.115.
[57]David Wang, Fictional Realism, p.4.
[58]Granat, p.110.

Madman, 1918), generally regarded as the first short story in the modern Chinese fictional corpus, is in the form of a framed narrative. The diary of the "madman" is related in the vernacular, but the diary is embedded in a frame recounted by an anonymous narrator and in classical Chinese.

More so than the storyteller's manner, the frame narrative provides a structure of authoritative closure which serves a didactic purpose. Embedding the main text of a story within a framework of explicit ideological values contextualizes that text. Any message which it conveys is both subordinated to and reinforced by the frame narrative. In narratological terms, the embedded tale is at a lower (or hypodiegetic) level than the frame narrative, even if the former is substantially greater in length than the latter.[59] The frame narrative establishes the "correct" ideological and historical context by which the reader should judge the events within the embedded narrative.

A number of short stories published in official literary journals in 1979 also adopted the embedded narrative form. The frame story is commonly set in the post-Cultural Revolution period when all the problems raised in the embedded story have been solved and characters' suffering has been alleviated. The embedded story, generally set during the Cultural Revolution period, can therefore be viewed from the "correct" historical standpoint. The causes of the problems and suffering are placed in their specific historical settings so that the reader evaluates them according to official historiography.

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[59]Baldick, p.57.

In Shao Wu and Hui Lin's "Hujiang xing" (Song of the Brave General), for example, an account of the eponymous general's life story is embedded in a framework wherein the narrator walks through a forest and notices a plane flying overhead which is carrying the general abroad on business.[60] The relaxing walk the narrator enjoys in the forest contrasts with the frenzied descriptions of persecution during the Cultural Revolution. Similarly the general's freedom to travel abroad in 1978 is contrasted with his imprisonment in the late 1960s. Implicit in the frame story is the officially propagated view that life is better now that the Gang of Four has been overthrown. The contrasts provided ensure that the reader upholds this "correct" standpoint when interpreting the message conveyed by the story.

The main plot of "Shilü de xin" (Palpitating Heart) by Shao Hua, which recounts the life story of Guo Tianyun, is also embedded in a frame story.[61] The narrator, a clerk in the propaganda department's theoretical group, is taking minutes at a meeting where Guo requests a period of recuperation in hospital for heart disease. The main narrative only begins after the clerk decides to make notes on Guo's life. As in "Song of the Brave General", the narrator of the embedded story in "Palpitating Heart" enjoys the privilege of viewing historical events according to the official interpretation.

In the above short stories the narrator of the frame story has continued to narrate the embedded story. There are also those stories in which the

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[60]Renmin wenxue, January 1979, pp.26-36.
[61]Renmin wenxue, November 1979, pp.27-30.

narrator of the primary narrative differs from that of the secondary narrative. One case in point is "Shuipingjiao" (Horizon Reef) by Wang Jiabin.[62] The frame narrative is related in the first person by Wang, a reporter dispatched to write an article on Horizon Reef Lighthouse. Wang is accompanied to the lighthouse by the writer Liu Shuishan, who then proceeds to relate the story of his life. The narrator of the frame narrative therefore becomes the narratee of the embedded narrative, as Liu makes constant second-person references to Wang during the course of his narration, such as: "Old Wang, didn't your newspaper also carry criticisms [of my story]?" (88). Furthermore, the appearance of the embedded narrative on the printed page differs markedly from the frame narrative, for it is presented in the form of one solid paragraph extending over a number of pages. This change in typographical form also indicates the change in narration.

Another case in point would be ""Bujinjin shi aiqing" (It's Not Merely Love) by Ai Mingzhi.[63] The frame narrative, recounted in the first person by marriage office cadre Su Xuelian, introduces the main characters of the story as they come to register their marriage. When asked why the couple, both in their fifties, want to marry against the wishes of their work unit, the man, Zhou Jun, recounts to Su the story of their life. It is interesting that the embedded narrative is introduced by: "Then he [Zhou Jun] began relating the story of Jiang Hui and himself" (21), yet the story is related in the third person, as if from the perspective of Su Xuelian. This move creates a distance between the reader and the events of the story. If the

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[62]Renmin wenxue, April 1979, pp.83-93.
[63]Zuopin, March 1979, pp.20-30.

author's intention is to control the reader's degree of involvement by removing the narration from the realm of subjectivity, then he is unsuccessful, for the story continues to be pervaded by mawkishness. Nonetheless, rendering the embedded story in the omniscient third person rather than the first person still lends an objectivity - and by extension a more disinterested reliability - to the narration.

There is no evidence of the embedded narrative in any of the short stories published in Jintian during 1979. Other fictional forms, especially Ai Shan's (Zhao Zhenkai) novella "Bodong" (Waves), experiment with multiple points of view and a series of narratives recounted by different narrators, but none of these narratives is embedded within another, nor is there an overall frame narrative to the work. Once again the contributors to Jintian have decided not to utilize a literary form popular among traditional and modern Chinese fiction writers. Their experimental works suggest a more open, less definitive structure whereby the reader is able to infer a variety of interpretations.

5.4 CHRONOLOGY OF PLOT

Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan points out that strict linear chronology of plot is "neither natural nor an actual characteristic of most stories."[64] This concept is intensified in a story where various characters and various story-lines are explored. Many writers adopt the method of disjunction, where two or more plot elements are juxtaposed to form a plot which is

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[64]Rimmon-Kenan, p.17.

neither linear nor chronological. This juxtaposition is known as "montage" and is the central structural principle of much modernist art. It is a principle which has moved into fiction from cinema.[65] Chatman also draws a connection between disjunction in the literary narrative and montage in the cinema. He describes it as "a collection of shots showing selected aspects of an event or sequence usually integrated by continuous music..."[66] In other words, montage allows a stream of visual images to flow before the eye through an organized juxtaposition which distorts temporal relationships. For the fiction writer, montage "provides both an example of the organization of elements without transitions or explanatory passages and an example of the inseparability of perspective and structure."[67]

5.4.1 Analepsis: the anachronistic recounting of past events.

Analepsis is a form of anachrony by which some events of a story are related at a point in the narrative after later story-events have already been recounted. Commonly referred to as flashback or retrospection, analepsis enables a storyteller to fill in background information about characters and events.[68] Analepsis may be introduced via personal reminiscences on the part of the narrator, descriptions of the past of characters narrated by other characters, or the psychological retrospection of a certain character triggered by external events. In narratological terms, the temporal level of the analepsis, despite its importance in terms

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[65]Sharon Spencer, Space, Time and Structure in the Modern Novel, New York: New York University Press, 1971, p.113.
[66]Chatman, p.69.
[67]Spencer, p.113.
[68]Baldick, p.9.

of plot development, must be secondary to the narrative in which it is introduced and therefore which defines it as an anachrony.

Writers of pre-modern Chinese fiction rarely used analepsis. The recalling of past events was commonly mediated by dialogue or in dream sequences. Although dream sequences pulled episodes out of established temporal and social contexts, these sequences were mediated by narrative explanation alerting the reader that a shift in temporal emphasis was occurring.[69] Conveying past events to the reader in dialogue form by a character merely transposed past events into the time of the story being narrated.[70] Analepsis came into usage by Chinese writers following influences of Western fiction and cinema in the post-May Fourth period. While this disjunctive technique grew in popularity among writers of the Republican era, after 1949 its usage was "discouraged" by the official authorities.[71] The newly established regime was eager to endorse literature extolling the virtues of life under socialism, and therefore discouraged the publication of those works which continued to bemoan the past.

By the post-Mao period analepsis had once again become popular. "Literature of the scars", for example, consisted of contemporary frame stories and embedded stories which recounted tragedies befalling the main character(s) during the Cultural Revolution. The embedded story was always analeptic, usually in the form of reminiscing on the part of the main

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[69]Gunn, p.10.
[70]Granat, p.118.
[71]Gunn, p.141. Gunn notes, however, that in the last decade of the Maoist era (1967-76) literature began to reabsorb many of the Europeanized features it had shunned in previous decades, including analepsis (p.142).

character and narrated in the language of the third-person omniscient narrator. The analepsis was triggered either by a re-encounter with a person from the past or by a return to the scene of a past event. The conclusion of the frame story normally depicted a solution to the problem raised in the analeptic embedded story. This narrative structure exerted a considerable influence over the form of later fictional works. The influence of cinematic techniques such as flashback and "flashback-within-flashback" on fiction should not be underplayed.[72]

Analepses in short stories published in Renmin wenxue and Zuopin during 1979 are usually triggered by external events and/or objects, and are then "introduced" by an explanation from the narrator. Ren Dalin's "Xinzhong de baihua" (Hundred Flowers in the Heart) describes a group of neighbours who achieve friendship during the Cultural Revolution by secretly listening to banned records.[73] Analeptic passages revealing the main characters' happier pasts are triggered by the music of certain records. Those passages are introduced by phrases such as "[it] gave rise to a series of memories" (69) or "picture after picture of his past life appeared before his eyes" (71). The main function of these analeptic accounts is to contrast the "dark days" of the Cultural Revolution with the "felicity" of the recent past before the Gang of Four had "usurped" the socialist line.

The main character of "Hanlei de xiaosheng" (Tearful Laughter) by Aode Si'er returns to the Mongolian household to which he was rusticated during

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[72]Link, Stubborn Weeds, p.25.
[73]Renmin wenxue, January 1979, pp.68-77.

the Cultural Revolution, and the sight of a certificate of merit hanging on the wall causes him to recall the events of ten years earlier.[74] The effect of the analepsis is to contrast the repression of the Cultural Revolution period with the happier present.

The narrator's introduction to analepsis is most commonly apprehended through two forms of imagery: the flickering of images on a cinema screen and the tidal surge of water. These two images are somewhat cliché-ed and appear more as stock phrases than creative means of introducing an analeptic passage. Cinematic imagery reinforces the influence of film technique on analepsis in fiction. "Huanxiangji" (The Return Home) by Ai Wu depicts a young soldier who returns to visit his brother after a decade of fighting against the KMT.[75] As he comes face to face with scenes from his youth, "the past flickered before him like scene after scene of a film," and the narrator proceeds to recount the fate of his protagonist's wife who disappeared when the KMT invaded Yan'an. The political prisoner in Yu Lin's "International Elegy" spends his days recalling the past where "memories flashed across his mind like a film."[76] Chen Ruilian, the wife of forestry commissioner Huang Tiegang in "Chunfeng chuiyousheng" (The Spring Breeze Shall Blow) by Zhang Chuo and Guan Zhendong, is deeply opposed to her husband's re-election to the post. The narrator informs the reader that Chen is recalling the past - when Huang was persecuted for having worked in Burma - by stating: "These unhappy recollections appeared again and again in Ruilian's mind like the flickering of a film."[77]

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[74]Renmin wenxue, September 1979, pp.60-68. This story had originally been published in Mongolian.
[75]Renmin wenxue, January 1979, pp.78-88.
[76]Renmin wenxue, February 1979, p.51.
[77]Zuopin, July 1979, p.15.

Introduction to analepsis through tidal imagery appears in Miao Ge's "Xingqiri" (Sunday).[78] A middle-aged mother worries about the future of her daughter after the imprisonment of the "Gang-following" husband whom she never loved. Under her pillow the mother discovers a newspaper from 1957 which triggers her reminiscing about a former boyfriend, which is presented to the reader in the form of analepsis introduced by: "Events from twenty-one years earlier burst open the floodgates of her long since dust-laden memory like frothing tidewater. They came gushing out in a tremendous torrent..." (89). Similar imagery is found in "Xueran de zaochen" (Blood-Dyed Morning) by Lü Lei.[79] Disoriented Red Guard Hou Xiaobin recalls two events from his past while searching the ruins of the city for his brother: ten years before when he and his brother captured a highwayman while collecting plants, and six months before when he split with his brother during the Red Guard struggles. Hou's recalling is introduced by "[he] took a deep breath and the floodgate of his memory completely burst open with a sudden crash..." (3). The similarly worded tidal imagery discussed here may point to the lack of creative originality in fiction written in Maoist Discourse. It became an accepted convention to introduce analepsis with not only the same imagery but also the same phraseology.

Analeptic passages are sometimes presented in ways similar to those common in pre-modern fiction. The analepsis in Ouyang Shan's "Chenggongzhe de bei'ai" (Grief of the Successful),[80] for example, takes

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[78]Renmin wenxue, July 1979, pp.88-93.
[79]Zuopin, May 1979, pp.3-9.
[80]Renmin wenxue, September 1979, pp.69-74.

the form of dialogue between one character and the narrator. In December 1978 a visiting Chinese-American history professor asks her host (the narrator of the story) to take her to a remote town. On visiting a roadside grave, the professor reveals the past in a lengthy speech to her host. The events are recounted from her point of view rather than that of the narrator. This is necessary for the narrator himself has no personal knowledge of the events recounted and rendering them in the form they are revealed to him highlights their authenticity. This also emphasizes the sentimentality of the narration which describes events from the recent past in more horrific terms than they actually were. As Alison Bailey has argued, "a potentially sentimental account is made more direct and powerful through the absence of a distinct authorial voice."[81] This point is upheld in "Grief of the Successful" by having the poignant events of the narrative recounted in the words of a character, rather than mediated through the narrator's discourse.

In "Zheshe zhi guang" (Refracted Light) by Zhang Xionghui, the analeptic main narrative concerning the past of doctor He Jiahui is revealed to the reader - and to the two customs officers within the text - by means of a tape recording.[82] The main problem is that the words on the tape were apparently spoken by He to a reporter in Hong Kong, yet they are related in the narrative in the third person. The reader is not presented with He Jiahui's actual words, but those words mediated through the narrator. Zhang Xionghui adopts a different method to the author of the

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[81]Alison Bailey, "Travelling Together: Narrative Technique in Zhang Jie's 'The Ark'," in Michael S. Duke, ed., Modern Chinese Women Writers: Critical Appraisals, Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1989, p.100.

[82]Zuopin, December 1979, pp.16-22.

previous story. This does not, however, render the tone of the narration any less sentimental. It establishes a "single enunciating" narrative position behind the story which, as Theodore Huters has argued, is necessary "to instill a didactic content into literature."[83] If He Jiahui's own words detracted from this didactic content, then by mediating them through the narrator, and by imposing upon them the "correct" standpoint, the didactic element could still be retained.

Analepsis plays an important part in a number of the short stories published in Jintian in 1979. For example, the two old men who meet by chance on a park bench in Shu Sheng's "Zai xiaogongyuanli" (In the Small Park) recall the past in ways similar to those described above.[84] The analeptic passage is also introduced in a similar way: "This was not the first time they had met. The old factory manager sank into his memories" (58).

The central narrative of Tie Bing's "Qiang" (The Wall) is related through analepses to the childhood of the narrator, where she first encountered Yu Zhiqiang, who is to be executed for murder.[85] Seeing Yu's brother in the courtroom triggers the narrator's memories, and the reader learns about Yu's past already knowing that he will be convicted as a murderer. Such an arrangement of plot events attests to another function of analepsis, that

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[83]Theodore Huters, "Lives in Profile: On the Authorial Voice in Modern and Contemporary Chinese Literature," in Ellen Widmer and David Der-wei Wang, eds., From May Fourth to June Fourth: Fiction and Film in Twentieth-Century China, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993, p.273.

[84]Jintian, 6 (December 1979), pp.57-62.

[85]Jintian, 5 (June 1979), pp.17-21.

of causing suspense. Here the ultimate conclusion of an event is given before information on what has led up to that event has been supplied. That information is to be revealed in the narrator's analeptic recalling of the missing plot events.

In other stories analepsis becomes a stepping stone to a more complex montage of past and present. Shi Mo's "Guilai de moshengren" (The Homecoming Stranger), for instance, is presented as a chronological sequence which is characterized by elliptical associative thinking and interspersed with analepses.[86] These analeptic passages are not ordered memories, but are presented as dreamlike snatches: Lanlan's childhood with her father, her visions of the tortured old man in the cellar, and her father's memories of a walk in the park with Lanlan. In "Lukou" (Intersection) by Cui Yan, the third-person narration of recently demobilized Chen Pingping walking the streets of Beijing in the evening snow is interrupted by associative thinking and analepsis.[87] The latter takes the form of unattributed direct speech. It eventually becomes clear that these are strands of remembered, but unconnected, conversations between Pingping and her former boyfriend, whom she later encounters. Associative thinking, which by its very nature is illogical, is unsuitable for the conveyance of a clear-cut ideological message. Where the carriage of such a message was not of paramount importance, such as in the fiction published in Jintian, plot could be structured freely around developing thought associations.

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[86]Jintian, 2 (26 February 1979), pp.21-31. See also Wolfgang Kubin, "A Literary Manifestation of the Peking Springtime: Shi Mo's The Stranger's Homecoming," Die Jagd nach dem Tiger, Bochum: Brockmeyer, 1984, p.165.
[87]Jintian, 2 (26 February 1979), pp.33-38.

5.4.2 Montage: the achronological juxtaposition of plot-events.

Even more complex juxtaposition of plot-events can be found in stories in both official and nonofficial journals where temporal and spatial dislocation comes into play. In the stories published in Jintian, narratorial emphasis was placed on the thought processes of characters. In order to give the illusion that the words on the page were a faithful representation of a character's thoughts, narrative structure was necessarily illogical and achronological. In line with Mao's 1942 insistence that literature should be neither ambiguous nor complex, fiction published in official journals in the PRC had never been, at least until the late 1970s, disposed towards an achronological montage of plot-events. In the previous section the point was made that analepsis, a less complex form of dislocation than montage, only become popular among PRC writers after 1976. Nonetheless, the publication of Ru Zhijuan's "Jianji cuole de gushi" (The Wrongly Edited Story) in February 1979 showed that some writers were ready to engage in experiments with narrative structure.[88]

"The Wrongly Edited Story" is a breakthrough thematically - for depicting the errors of a Party cadre in the period before 1966, and also technically - for replacing the traditional structure of linear time with that of a scenic montage.[89] Ru charts the moral degeneration of cadre Lao Gan who, in 1948, is an affable revolutionary enduring hardships along with the peasants, but who, a decade later, is an inconsiderate and rash fanatic attempting to secure power and prestige at the expense of the peasants. In

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[88]Renmin wenxue, February 1979, pp.65-76.
[89]Duke, Blooming and Contending, p.73.

structuring her story, Ru has interwoven time-and-space and history-and-fantasy in a specific order to accentuate the thought processes of the old peasant Lao Shou, through which the reader accesses the story.

The narrated present of the story is 1958. Lao Shou's dissatisfaction with Lao Gan triggers memories of past experiences in the form of analepses, which alternate section by section with the primary narrative. These analepses are in the form of dream, daydream and thought association, and are related almost exclusively in the third person. When the mimetic mode proves inadequate for expressing her frustrations, Ru illuminates the thought processes of her main character, revealing the abstractions of his subconscious world. The seven sections of the story form a crystallized whole which elucidates Lao Shou's complex psyche. The concluding and introductory sentences of juxtaposed passages set at different times are generally related to each other. There are several references to Lao Shou's reminiscing being a result of sleep. The first section (1958) moves into the second section (1947) with "the jolting of the cart made him feel drowsy," which suggests that the past is remembered as a dream. Elsewhere this notion is described in greater detail:

> Some said those sleepy eyes were symptomatic of losing one's mind. Some said they were an expression of anger and depression. Some said that he was reminiscing about the past, thinking of Lao Gan. Who knows?! What on earth was going on behind those sleepy eyes...? (71).

Other examples are even more closely related. The third section (1958) concludes with Lao Shou walking towards Lao Gan's house and the fourth section (1948) commences with him walking past the same house. Similarly, the fourth section concludes with Lao Shou sitting cross-legged, rocking

with joy under his newly-planted pear trees, and the fifth section (1958) commences with him rocking with astonishment under the pear trees which are to be chopped down to increase grain output.

On the whole, Chinese critics appeared favourable towards Ru Zhijuan's innovative structure. A number of these critics even suggested that she was pioneering a Chinese version of the stream of consciousness technique. Shi Hanren, for example, claims that "the description of Lao Shou's thought processes when his consciousness has been blurred shares a certain similarity with Western modernist 'stream of consciousness' [yishiliu] fiction."[90] Dan Ge agrees by saying that "the interweaving between thought processes, reality and dreams, is one of the distinctive methods of stream of consciousness."[91] There was, however, a tendency among Chinese critics in the early 1980s to refer to any experimentation of literary structure or language as examples of "stream of consciousness". "Stream of consciousness" was perceived as a literary "school" (liupai) rather than as a writing technique. If "stream of consciousness" is to be defined in its Western sense as "the continuous flow of a character's mental process, in which sense perceptions mingle with conscious and half-conscious thoughts, memories, expectations, feelings, and random

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[90]Shi Hanren, "Tan yishu fengge de fazhan - xidu Ru Zhijuan jinzuo" (Discussing the Development of Artistic Style - Happily Reading Ru Zhijuan's Recent Works), Guangming ribao, 23 January 1980, quoted in Wang Rui and Luo Qianyi, eds., Xinshiqi zhongduanpian xiaoshuo ziliao xuanji (A Selection of Material on Short Stories and Novellas of the New Period), Changchun: Jilin jiaoyu chubanshe, 1988, p.394.

[91]Dan Ge, "Tansuo yu chuangxin - mantan Ru Zhijuan de xinzuo" (Exploration and Innovation: Informally Discussing Ru Zhijuan's New Works), Wenyibao, March 1980, quoted in Wang and Luo, pp.395-6.

associations,"[92] then the techniques adopted by Ru Zhijuan in "The Wrongly Edited Story" do not come close to "stream of consciousness".

For all her technical breakthroughs, Ru Zhijuan was apparently required to begin and conclude her story with explanatory passages in order to secure publication.[93] The attached prologue and epilogue serve the same function as the frame narrative. In other words, they provide the story with a "correct" historical perspective from which to view the events described. The prologue is aimed at offsetting any difficulties the reader may experience about the (a)chronological nature of the story:

> Let me make this clear from the very beginning: This is a story that has been linked together wrongly. I have, however, striven to make it appear coherent so as to avoid confusion on the part of the reader (65).

Ru Zhijuan's choice of the word "wrongly" (cuo) is interesting. Her story is not so much structured in a "wrong" way - although it is certainly achronological and therefore unconventional - for there are reasons, both political and literary, for Ru's structuring the story in this manner. Juxtaposing events from different historical periods serves to highlight the moral deterioration of Lao Gan and cadres like him by direct comparison. The word cuo may therefore best be understood to mean "intricate" and "complex", which was one of its original definitions, rather than merely "wrong".

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[92]Abrams, p.202.

[93]Duke maintains that Ru was obliged to add a prologue and epilogue to her original draft before the editorial board of Renmin wenxue would accept her story for publication. (Blooming and Contending, p.73).

The final section of the narrative is entitled "Zhe bushi jiewei" (This is not the conclusion) and depicts Lao Shou's incredulity at the commune's abandoning its agricultural directive and taking up smelting steel. The significance of this title is that just as the narrative has not reached its conclusion, so the misguided demands of Party officials continue unabated. However, with its publication in Renmin wenxue, an epilogue has been lamely attached, its primary aim to allude to the reconciliation between previously erring cadres and the people in post-Mao society:

> The epilogue takes place in January 1979 when Lao Shou and Lao Gan meet again and vent their grievances. For how many years and at what cost have they striven to regain the ideals of all those years ago? All is eventually realized in the year of great joy, great fortune and great activity for the Chinese people (76).

Ensuring the reader that the misguided demands of CCP cadres were now a thing of the past is an essential move to provide the story with the "correct" moral stance.

In the previous chapter the point was made that establishment writer Wang Meng's experimentation with chronology of plot and use of language made him the central figure in the debates on stream of consciousness and modernism in China. Restricting the discussion to only those short stories in the database would present only a part of the picture of the experimentation in plot chronology undertaken by Chinese fiction writers in 1979. It is in the novella that more major examples of structural innovation are to be found. "Buli" (Bolshevik Salute), a novella published in September 1979, is Wang Meng's earliest achronological narrative.[94] What made the story so outstanding was not its suggestion that the errors of the

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[94]Dangdai (Contemporary), No.3 (September) 1979, pp.4-39.

CCP may be traced back to the 1950s, but its unorthodox means of narration. Wang had originally written the novella with the events of main character Zhong Yicheng's life in chronological order, yet the style had been "dull and flat" (pingpu zhixu), giving the overall impression of an accounts ledger.[95] In its published form, "Bolshevik Salute" juxtaposes the major events of Zhong's life in a "montage-like" manner, concentrating on his "psychological meanderings" to the detriment of a chronological plot.[96]

Like Ru Zhijuan's "The Wrongly Edited Story", "Bolshevik Salute" was heralded by a number of Chinese critics as an example of the "Western modernist 'stream of consciousness' technique."[97] If Wang Meng employed structural devices akin to "modernism", it was potentially difficult to reconcile him as a literary "loyalist". In the Chinese perspective, "modernism" was viewed as undermining the "realist" tenet that literature is a mimetic reflection of society. It brought to literature a detached and difficult style that "cast doubt on the theoretical and practical foundations of socialist society."[98] A 1979 definition of the term "modernism" (xianshi zhuyi) leaves the reader in little doubt as to its official designation: "Modernism" is a "bourgeois literary school and trend" which "violates the traditional methods of realism" and, as a consequence, "destroys

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[95]He Xilai, "Xinling de bodong yu qingtu" (Beating and Unburdening of the Heart), reprinted in Zhu Zhai, ed., Zhongguo xinwenyi daxi: 1976-1982 (Series on China's New Literature and Art), Vol.2, Beijing: Zhongguo wenlian chuban gongsi, 1986, p.535.

[96]He Xilai, p.536.

[97]He Xilai, p.539. He defines this technique in terms of (1) entering the character's inner world; (2) subjectivity; (3) multiplicity of themes; (4) emulating the zawen style; and (5) psychological structure.

[98]Wendy Larson, "Wang Meng and the Modernist Controversy in Contemporary China," Bolshevik Salute: A Modernist Chinese Novel, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1989, p.xiii.

literature's inherent form, and the fundamental rules of creativity."[99] In short, "modernist" techniques would serve to dilute, render ambiguous or even negate the "correct" message which Chinese literature in the late 1970s was expected to convey.

Wang Meng was "dexterous" enough to locate a common ground between "a dogged faith in Party politics" and technical innovation.[100] He played down the influence of Western modernism on his literary creation. He said that works such as "Bolshevik Salute" "take the character and the story as the warp, and psychological descriptions (including techniques both similar to and totally different from the western modernist 'stream of consciousness') as the weft".[101]

The structure of "Bolshevik Salute", despite its obvious experimentation, remains very much in the mould of Maoist Discourse. Firstly, the narrated present of the story, and more importantly its final section, are set in 1979 when Zhong Yicheng has been rehabilitated and his unfailing loyalty in the CCP has paid dividends. The historiography depicted in the narrative is therefore fully in keeping with the official line. Any potential subversion presented by the unconventional structure is mitigated by the conventionally didactic message carried by the story. Secondly, an authoritative narrative voice dominates throughout the text. On occasion

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[99]Cihai (1979), p.2760.

[100]Geremie Barmé, "Modernism and China," in Stephen C. Soong and John Minford, eds., Trees on the Mountain; An Anthology of New Chinese Writing, Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1984, p.48.

[101]Wang Meng, "Wenxue yu wo" (Literature and Me) quoted in Wang Meng xiaoshuo chuangxin ziliao (Material on Innovation in Wang Meng's Fiction), Beijing: Renmin daxue chubanshe, 1980.

the narrative and authorial voices of the story concord so that the narrator's accent is determined by the thoughts and words of the author. It is therefore unsurprising that Wang Meng's self-confessed loyalty to the CCP should become explicit in his depiction of the plight of Zhong Yicheng.

The narrators of both "The Wrongly Edited Story" and "Bolshevik Salute" make explicit temporal references at the beginning of each section of narrative so that the reader knows instantly the historical framework for the action which follows. This is a necessary move, at least according to the Marxist literary line, to pinpoint for the reader the exact stage in history the action is set, thereby ensuring that the reader can "appreciate" the action according to official historiography.[102] The historical framework of the temporal dislocations in the short stories in Jintian are less clearly defined.

In Tian Ran's "Yuanliang wo, xiongdi" (Forgive Me, Brothers), there are three distinct elements to the narrative: symbolic dreams, memories and the narrated present - where bureau chief An Song dozes in his office.[103] These three elements are structured chronologically so that events within each element progress in a linear manner. The complex symbolism of the dream sequences, in which An finds himself in a desert pursued by an unknown foe, and then poisoned by a snake, refers to his treatment of colleagues as he progressed along the ladder of officialdom. The dream

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[102]Hegel, "Making the Past," p.206. Hegel writes that, unlike Confucian literary works, Marxist works "must be dated precisely in order to pinpoint the specific stage in history from which the class struggle will progress through the narrative."

[103]Jintian, 4 (June 1979), pp.23-30.

sequences therefore point to An's guilt at having treated colleagues so badly in his own pursuit of success. As the final dream recalls:

> He led many others by the hand through muddy swamps in the dark, striding across deep valleys and high mountains... They embraced each other and yet massacred each other. He rose to the dizzy heights, embraced by the smiles of his many "bosom buddies" and of passing strangers alike. Yet faces can change as quickly as clouds in a stormy sky. He trod them underfoot. Pushed them. Took bites out of them... Each one of them rolled from the summit into the abyss (29).

The sequences of memory, which refer to An's rejection of ethical values in favour of self-preservation, are more disjunctive in nature. As a young workshop cadre, An is incensed by the wrongful imprisonment of a colleague, but his pleading with the authorities falls on deaf ears. One evening in summer An is spoken to by the local CCP secretary about the foolishness of his actions. The final memory sequence reveals An speaking out in public against the colleague whose cause he had once championed.

It is not until the end of the story, when An awakes in his office, that the reader becomes totally aware of the narrated present (and location) of the narrative. Prior to this, voices from the narrated present have been vaguely audible to An in his dreaming state. The voices belong to An's secretary, the son of a cadre come to curry favour and a young man speaking out against the injustices carried out by An in the name of discipline. The reader first gains an inkling as to the anachrony between the plot elements of the story when the memory sequence, clearly set in the early days of the Cultural Revolution, is disturbed by voices speaking of the New Constitution ratified in 1978. At this stage the narrated present of the story has not been clearly established. Other occurrences in the

present trigger and influence An's thought processes. For instance, a fan continually hums above An's head as he sleeps, yet in his thoughts the humming becomes the sound of machinery in the workshop.

It is in Zhao Zhenkai's "Bodong" (Waves) that the narrative structure conforms most closely to the disjunctive nature of the processes of thought.[104] The fragmentary jigsaw of first-person narrative in the form of diary entries and interior monologue attests to the idea that life fluctuates "between illusion and reality, between a person and society, within relationships and even within a single personality."[105] In line with Zhao's desire to capture the "undulations" of his characters' thoughts and feelings, "Waves" becomes a breakthrough in contemporary Chinese discursive technique. It is character-centred, external action is laconic, and the meditations of the characters are presented in abstruse, disjointed language. The author is "less burdened with the need to tell a story" and more concerned with an "imagistic" prose style.[106] The achieved content of "Waves" has been praised in the following manner: "In terms of structural and linguistic innovation, range and depth of characterization, philosophic reach and social criticisms, it stands alone in the Chinese literature of 1949-1979."[107] In terms of language and structure, "Waves" should be acknowledged as a significant milestone in the development of contemporary Chinese fictional discourse.

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[104]Jintian, 4, pp.31-71; 5, pp.1-13, 29-48; 6, pp.21-41, 43-56. The novella was first written in November 1974, revised in 1976 and again in early 1979 shortly before its publication in Jintian.

[105]Cooke and McDougall, p.124.

[106]Leo Lee, "Beyond Realism," p.67.

[107]Bonnie S. McDougall, "Zhao Zhenkai's Fiction: A Study in Cultural Alienation," Modern Chinese Literature, Vol.1 No.1, September 1984, pp.115-6.

"Waves" is distinguished by disjunction. The past, present and future of a number of characters are revealed in short bursts and juxtaposed with each other thereby depriving the reader of any unifying perspective.[108] In his 1982 criticism of the novella, Yi Yan, then deputy editor of Wenyibao (Literature and Art Gazette), claimed that Zhao Zhenkai's technical innovations rendered the novella menglong, and therefore hard to understand.[109] Yi also stated that the use of the "stream of consciousness" technique, encompassing disjunct ellipses and complex psychological expressions, left him with a sense of total confusion. Yi's orthodox criticism of the unorthodox structure displayed in "Waves" is overwhelmingly negative. His contention that the novella was too obscure to be accessible to the reader is ideologically, rather than literally, based. The novella's intended readers, the younger generation who underwent psychological crisis during the Cultural Revolution, would have encountered no difficulty in appreciating the thoughts and feelings of the characters in the light of their own experiences. Moreover, Western critics have pointed out that this technique is "particularly appropriate for portraying the fragmented lives and shattered dreams of this generation..."[110]

As the structure of "Waves" is unorthodox, it is potentially subversive. Its structure lacks the coherence and unambiguity demanded by Maoist Discourse. The lack of a univocal narrator defining the action in the novella in ideological terms results in the loss of a sense of authority and

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[108]Philip Williams, "A New Beginning for the Modernist Novel: Zhao Zhenkai's Bodong," Modern Chinese Literature, Vol.5 No.1, Spring 1989, p.74.

[109]Yi Yan, "Ping 'Bodong' ji qita" (On "Waves" and Others), Wenyibao, April 1982, pp.36-40.

[110]McDougall, "Zhao Zhenkai's Fiction," p.109.

absolute truth.[111] More than this, Zhao Zhenkai's "adroit dispersal" of the authority of discourse emphasizes the shortcomings of "an ultra-centralized socio-political structure."[112] Scholes and Kellogg view the challenge of the multiple narrator to traditional literary structures in a wider context: "the tendency of modern writers to multiply narrators or to circumvent the restrictions of empirical eyewitness narration are signs of the decline of 'realism' as an esthetic force in narrative."[113]

5.5 SECTIONAL DIVISION

Valerie Shaw makes the point that the aim of the short story is to achieve a single concentrated impression, and that modern literary critics would argue that a short story "ought not to be" divided into chapters (or sections) "at any stage of its composition and appreciation."[114] The short story in 20th century China has, almost consistently, been divided by the author into sections. Sectional dividing is one of the "most frequently used" methods of structuring stories in both pre-modern and 20th century Chinese fiction.[115] The pre-modern Chinese novel was divided into a number of chapters or hui, a term which derived from the time interval required for the storyteller's assistants to collect donations from the audience at intervals during the story.[116] Furthermore, a number of late

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[111]Bailey, p.99.
[112]Williams, "A New Beginning," p.86.
[113]Scholes and Kellogg, p.263.
[114]Shaw, p.36. Shaw's comments appear in the form of a tentative conclusion to a discussion on Robert Louis Stevenson's views on the short story, and in particular his uncertainty about not dividing his short stories into chapters.
[115]Granat, p.115.
[116]Idema, p.70.

19th century European short story writers who influenced their Chinese counterparts in the post-May Fourth period, notably Guy de Maupassant (1850-1893) and Anton Chekhov (1860-1904), also divided their short stories into a number of sections. From the 1920s Chinese short stories have therefore commonly been divided into sections preceded by titles, numbers or merely blank spaces. The divisions are generally determined by changes in time, action or scene within the story being recounted.

Most of the short stories published by Renmin wenxue and Zuopin during 1979 are divided into sections. These sections are generally numbered, yet a number of stories have titled section headings. These titles almost exclusively allude to the plot development and/or action within the section to which they are attributed. In certain cases, the title is but a synopsis of the section. "Feng guniang" (The Crazy Girl) by Yang Wenzhi,[117] for instance, consists of four such titled sections: "Introduction", "Disaster", "Three hours in the life of a woman", and "An unjustified ending". The phrasing of the first and last of these sections is reminiscent of the prologue and epilogue in pre-modern vernacular fiction. Cheng Xianzhang's "Taohuadu" (Peach Blossom Crossing) is similarly divided into five synoptically titled sections: "Reunion", "The new official takes office", "Is this being 'restorationist'?", "The lawsuit", and "The Longs fight for Peach Blossom Crossing".[118]

In other cases, as well as describing in synopsis the action in each section, the headings tease out an element from that action and express it

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[117]Zuopin, September 1979, pp.7-17.
[118]Renmin wenxue, October 1979, pp.69-76.

imagistically, often encompassing allusions to classical literature. "Zai xiaohe nabian" (On the Other Side of the Stream) by Kong Jiesheng is one such example.[119] While headings such as "Alone in the mountains" and "Night words at the thatched cottage" refer directly to the action, "Flying towards the light" (feixiang guangming) alludes through conventional imagery to the dénouement of the plot in which the "light" of the post-Cultural Revolution society will solve all problems. Two of the headings refer directly to traditional Chinese culture. The fourth section is titled: "Both are impoverished and rejected by the world" (tongshi tianya lunluoren) and is a direct quotation from Tang dynasty poet Bai Juyi's (772-846) renowned poem "Pipa xing" (Song of the Pipa, 816). The piteous fate of Mu Lan and Yan Liang in Kong's story is therefore indirectly compared to the fate of the poet and the pipa-player in Bai's poem. The final section of the story is entitled "Meeting at Magpie Bridge" (quegiao xianghui) and refers to the legend of the Cowherd (niulang) and the Weaver Maid (zhinü), two stars who are only able to meet once a year when magpies build a bridge across the Milky Way which separates them. The inference of this heading is twofold. Firstly, Mu Lan and Yan Liang discover that they are not after all brother and sister and are therefore able to continue their relationship as lovers. Secondly, just as the magpies bridge the Milky Way, so the mother's posthumous letter clarifying the true relationship between Mu and Yan fords the stream which once separated them. This imagery, which would have been familiar to the reader, is not only rather cliché-ed, but also very sentimental in tone.

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[119]Zuopin, March 1979, pp.31-42.

A number of short stories published in Zuopin are divided into sections preceded by lengthy titles. While these titles may be seen as referring to the action within each section, they are pitched at a more indirect and often humorous level. In certain respects, they share something in common with the chapter headings of traditional novels which consist of poetic couplets introducing the characters relevant to the action. However, the section headings of the contemporary short stories lack the formality of the classical language and are presented in colloquial, folksy language. Peng Xiong's "Honghua xipan de xiju" (Comedy on the Banks of Red Flower Stream) begins with "Origins of Red Flower Stream and why it should be known far and wide" and concludes with "Epilogue - each is in its proper place".[120] Intermediate sections are headed by titles such as "The girl grows up and undergoes eighteen changes the more she changes the more attractive she becomes", "Second Aunt Pan thinks of the standard for choosing a son-in-law from an encounter with a bowl of soy-paste" and the mock antithetical couplet "How Second Uncle Pan understood wrongly (huicuole yi) and how Second Aunt Pan expressed her feelings wrongly (biaocuole qing). Similar section headings can be found in Chu Fujin's "Shanqu zhuren Li Shu" (Li Shu - Director of the Mountain District).[121] The first section of the story is actually preceded by the heading "Kaipian" which was the term used for the "introductory song" in the tanci, the traditional storytelling form which was accompanied by string instrumentation. This use of section headings is closely related to the "national form" of literature advocated by Mao in 1942. Literature was to be written in a language which the "masses" found accessible and was to be based on

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[120]Zuopin, September 1979, pp.28-38.
[121]Zuopin, December 1979, pp.27-35.

examples from the folk and oral traditions. Simulating aspects from those traditions in post-Mao fiction was yet further evidence of conformity to the literary line prescribed at Yan'an.

One of the most interesting sectional divisions appears in Jiang Zilong's "Qiaochangzhang shangrenji" (Manager Qiao Assumes Office).[122] The story is divided into three titled sections, each of which is further subdivided into short, numbered sections. Much of the story is organized along the pattern of a Beijing opera. This is supported by the main character Qiao Guangpu's continued references to opera throughout the story. It may therefore be argued that the story's plot "is linked to the plots and characters of an opera familiar to the readers" which in turn adds both "depth and perspective" to the narrative.[123] Jiang Zilong sets the motives and actions of his characters into contexts known to the reader. These contexts reinforce the "correct" appreciation of his short story by comparing it to established examples. This was particularly important in the determination of positive and negative characters, whose respective motivations would be clarified further by association with positive and negative characters from the operatic repertoire. It was arguably even more pressing for Jiang to present manager Qiao, an intellectual, in the guise of an honest and respected operatic character - in this case Bao Gong - for within the hitherto advocated "worker-peasant-soldier" orientation of literature there was no place for the intellectual hero.[124]

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[122]Renmin wenxue, July 1979, pp.
[123]Wagner, p.426.
[124]Wagner, p.383.

Opera terminology extends to the titles of the story's three sections which read like three acts of an opera - "Coming out of the mountains" (chushan), "Taking office" (shangren), "Playing the lead" (zhujue) - the subsections being separate scenes within these acts. On the surface, structuring a short story along the lines of an operatic drama may detract from the mimetic effect. The reader is automatically distanced from the events portrayed. They may appear not as the "slice of life" intended by "realism", but as an artificially staged drama. In many respects, however, this method of structuration may be seen as a hangover from the Cultural Revolution period when "model operas" (yangbanxi) were promoted as the models for all forms of literature.

Literature of the Cultural Revolution was without doubt unmimetic, for it failed to reflect the "reality" of life at the time. Vitiated by terms such as "revolutionary" and "romanticism", the so-called "realist" literature promoted during the Cultural Revolution was "cleansed of historical impurities, impeccable in doctrine and immaculate in conception."[125] Plots were created and structured so as to depict a heroic proletarian character emerging victorious from a struggle with the "class enemy". While, to a certain extent, Qiao Guangpu is created along similar lines insofar as he emerges victorious from a struggle with those opposing reform, the society around him is not presented in an idealized light. The structure of "Manager Qiao Assumes Office" is indebted to the norms of a traditional art-form, rather than of the "model operas" of the Cultural Revolution, which were being denounced by critics of the day.

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[125]David E. Pollard, "The Short Story in the Cultural Revolution," China Quarterly, 73, Spring 1978, p.99.

The short stories published in Jintian tend neither to be divided by titled sections nor, with the exception of Shi Mo's "The Homecoming Stranger", by numbered sections. Some of the stories are, however, divided by changes in action and/or time, and this is marked typographically by line spacing in the text. This approach concords more closely with the contemporary Western short story than with the methods of sectional division in pre-modern Chinese narratives.

5.6 CONCLUSIONS

The structure of a literary work may promote or subvert a particular ideology. The ideological strictures imposed upon an author are more significant in shaping that author's writing than any "organic" elements within the stories themselves. The structure of the short stories published in Renmin wenxue and Zuopin in 1979 was beholden to the demands of Maoist Discourse in the same way that language was. Literature was structured in order to propagate the "correct" ideological standpoint and to reinforce the message conveyed in the text.

The use of a number of devices of structuration from pre-modern vernacular fiction points to the continued influence of Mao's 1942 advocation that writers should learn from China's rich oral tradition and "make the past serve the present." This regression to the conventions of pre-modern fiction is also representative of a stagnation in literary creativity.

Despite official pretensions of liberalization, in the late 1970s the officially-sanctioned literary line strove to preclude any interpretation of

literary works other than the one intended by the authorities.[126] The use of structuration in literature emphasizes this point. The storyteller-narrator in both pre-modern and post-Yan'an Chinese fiction has been portrayed as a reliable narrator who shares the moral and ideological values of his or her readers. It is, however, important to make the distinction between the actual readers of a work and the intended, or "implied", readership. Any text may be said to presuppose an "implied" reader who had "the particular attitudes appropriate to that text in order for it to achieve its full effect."[127] In their desire to have their works accepted by the official imprimatur, Chinese writers in the late 1970s very much bore government censors in mind as the primary "implied" reader. In order not to antagonize the censors and thereby achieve publication, literary works had to be structured according to the values held by the establishment. Above all, writers had to remain mindful of the ideological message carried by literary structure.

There does not appear to be a noticeable difference between the structuration used by authors contributing to Renmin wenxue or Zuopin. Continuing to employ formal devices approved of by the establishment, and tempering those devices to carry the "correct" ideological message, saw the writers remaining on safe ideological ground. Most of the writers publishing in official literary journals eschewed any attempt at innovative structure for

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[126]Richard King, "Revisionism and Transformation in the Cultural Revolution Novel," Modern Chinese Literature, Vol.7 No.1, Spring 1993, p.110. Readers are, of course, at liberty to interpret the message in a literary text differently from that "prescribed" in the text.

[127]Baldick, p.108. "Implied reader" is a term used by Wolfgang Iser and other theorists of reader-response criticism to denote the hypothetical figure of the reader to whom a given work is designed to address itself.

their works, lest they subject themselves to criticism and censure. Having said that, Ru Zhijuan was praised for her structural innovations in "The Wrongly Edited Story". Nonetheless, she was required to add a "politically correct" prologue and epilogue to her work, and failed to continue experimentation with narrative structure in any of her later short stories. For his part, Wang Meng had to defend his structural innovations against criticisms of being too radical and potentially anti-Marxist.

The short stories published in Jintian in 1979 are structured differently. The storyteller-narrator is notably absent. There are no epilogues or other closure-oriented devices promoting an authoritative ideology. That these stories fail to present an authoritative narrative voice and introduce achronological structural devices through thought association is sufficient to render them at least potentially subversive. This subversion results from the stories' refusal to promote a coherent ideology, in particular the official line of the day, rather than their promotion of an alternative ideology. Moreover, as Bei Dao has argued, the influence of Western contemporary writers - in unofficially circulated translations - such as Kafka, Camus, Sartre, Salinger and Kerouac worked more in shaping the works of those young writers contributing to nonofficial journals than the rhetoric of the Maoist line.[128] The psychological nature of many of the Jintian stories leads to a greater propensity for disjunction and juxtaposition of images as plot-lines are determined by the illogical thought processes of characters. This was viewed unfavourably by orthodox literary critics, who advised readers against reading the Jintian stories on the grounds that they were too

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[128]Bei Dao, p.63.

abstruse for the average reader to appreciate. In reality, they were being condemned for their failure to adhere to a structure which promoted the "correct" ideological view.

Chapter Six:
Authorial Presence and Narrative Modes

6.1 THE AUTHOR AND THE NARRATOR

A narrative is a means of communication between author and audience. The effectiveness of the communication relies on the authority and clarity of the message imparted. The most important force behind the creation of a work of literature is the author, the one who determines the form which the communication takes and who stamps his or her "personality" on the work. Interpreting a work of literature in terms of the personality and life of the author has therefore been one of the oldest and best-established methods of literary study.[1] The author's judgement is always present in his or her work for, as Wayne C. Booth points out, it is impossible to drive "the author from the house of fiction."[2]

The author may choose to disguise his or her presence in the narrative. The reader of a literary text becomes aware of an authorial voice beyond the fictitious voices speaking in a work, and of a person behind the characters peopling that work. This voice not only expresses attitudes towards characters and materials within the work, but also towards the audience outside the work.[3] It contains within it the suggestion of a

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[1]Wellek and Warren, p.75.

[2]Booth, p.20. Booth points out that although the author is able to disguise him or herself in the narrative, he or she can never choose to disappear.

[3]Abrams, p.155.

pervasive presence, "a determinate intelligence and moral sensibility, which has invented, ordered, rendered, and expressed all these literary characters and materials in just this way."[4] Authorial voice may also be used to underline an ideological message. An authoritative presence is able to "invent, order and render" the events of a text in order to highlight a specific didactic point.

Booth has coined the term "implied author" to refer to authorial voice.[5] The implied author is an imagined entity whose existence is inferred by a judicial reading of the text. Although intrinsically related to the real author, the implied author should remain a distinct entity. The real author may well have written other works with a different kind of implied author behind them. A real author will don the guise of different personae to promote different ideologies. The implied author should also be distinguished from the narrator, for the implied author is assumed to be responsible for deciding which kind of narrator will present the text to the reader. It is through the implied author therefore that the real author's presence may be felt in the narrative.[6]

The authorial voice is the means through which the author communicates with the reader. The way this communication is expressed and delivered to the reader is dependent upon the point of view adopted in the narrative. In short, point of view refers to the way a story is told. It is the mode

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[4]Abrams, p.157. The persona is sometimes described as representing an authorial tone, which is the stance the authorial voice adopts towards those he or she is addressing, i.e. the readers.

[5]Booth, p.73.

[6]Baldick, p.107.

established by an author by means of which the reader is presented with the characters, dialogues, actions and events within a work of fiction.[7] While the authorial voice is always to be apprehended outside the story proper, point of view is to be found in the story. It is the "physical place or ideological situation or practical life-orientation" to which narrative events stand in relation.[8] Narrative voice is the group of characteristics displayed by the "speaker" or narrator of the text, and point of view is the vantage point from which the speaker speaks. Distinctions between various kinds of narrative voice tend to be distinctions between kinds of narrator in terms of how they address the reader and the points of view from which they perceive events.[9] In brief, the narrator may tell a story from a third-person perspective or from a first-person perspective. The narration may be omnisicent, that is, everything about the characters and events in the narrative is known and unrestricted access to those characters' thoughts and feelings is presumed. Narration may also be limited, that is, knowledge of events and characters is confined to whatever is observed by a single narrator.

Narrative point of view points to the communication between the speaker in the tale and the audience. The speaker's point of view is determined by the implied author at the "extrafictional" level. In terms of narrative hierarchy, the levels of voice within a literary text may be delineated as follows: real author (the creator who physically writes the story) - implied

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[7]Abrams, p.165. Point of view has always been a practical concern of the novel. Early theoretical works such as Percy Lubbock, The Craft of Fiction (1926) and Henry James, The Art of the Novel (1934) both emphasized the study of point of view.

[8]Chatman, p.153.

[9]Baldick, p.239.

author (the authorial voice governing the narrative) - narrator (the teller of the tale) - audience/reader. The audience may also be subdivided in a hierarchical manner: real reader (the reader who physically holds the book and engages in the act of reading) - implied reader (the hypothetical figure of the reader to whom a given work is designed to address itself) - narratee (the imagined person the narrator is assumed to be addressing in the narrative).[10]

Literary texts may permit a range of possible readings and meanings. Wolfgang Iser has viewed the literary text as a product of an author's "intentional acts." In other words, the authorial voice governing a text is designed, at least in part, to control the reader's responses. The text also contains a number of gaps ("indeterminate elements") which the reader must fill in by participation with what is given in the text and based upon his or her own accumulated experiences.[11] However, the author's intentional acts establish certain limits on interpretation of the text. In literature with a primarily didactic function, these limits render a tight control on reader response and restrict the number of "indeterminate elements" to a minimum.

Determining the extent of authorial presence and narrative point of view in post-1976 Chinese short stories is an approach which does not appear to have been fully explored by critics either in China or in the West. Interpreting the short stories in the database of this study from such an approach should contribute to a further understanding of the methods of

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[10]Rimmon-Kenan, p.86.
[11]Abrams, p.269.

narration favoured by authors contributing to official and nonofficial literary journals. Similarities and/or differences in these methods of narration would also point to the extent to which the short stories of 1979 adhered to or broke away from the established modes of narration in fiction. Furthermore, the extent of the presence of the authorial voice in these stories may also have implications for the message conveyed.

6.2 MARKERS OF AUTHORIAL PRESENCE

The authorial voice governing a literary text is endowed with the authority of its creator and the environment in which it was produced. If the text is considered the aesthetic representation of the circumstances in which it was created, its content and formal structures may be understood to reflect an authorial view. While the real author's beliefs, circumstances and life experience continue to be relevant, it is the ideas within the text which lead the reader to discern the identity of the implied author.[12] There is not necessarily any identification between an author and any single voice within the text. Furthermore, the narrative voice may have little or nothing in common with the authorial voice.[13] The author is the "ultimate designer" of the text, his or her voice residing outside the narrative at the extrafictional level.[14] The narrator, on the other hand, resides within the narrative and is subordinated to the (implied) author.

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[12]Lanser, p.49.
[13]Lanser, p.122.
[14]Chatman, p.33.

The author may reveal himself or herself in the text in two distinct ways: a public (or created) self and a private (or revealed) self. The public self encoded in the narrative is a fabricated persona the author dons to greet his or her audience. Behind this persona the author attempts, not always with any degree of success, to erase any direct reference to the "real" self from his or her writing. The author's public self normally has little or no existence outside the context of the story. The private self encompasses those facets of the author's psyche which unwittingly seep into the work and are revealed as an expression, albeit encoded, of the real author's community and experience.[15] The two authorial selves are not generally synonymous, although either may be used to promote a particular ideological message.

Extrafictional devices, such as authorial voice, come into existence before the story begins. All other voices created within the text are subordinate to it. The message carried by a work of literature is therefore governed by the authorial, rather than the narrative, voice, although the latter may be used to uphold the former. Nevertheless, there can be no guarantee that the author will be able to control the reception of his or her creation. Written discourse, as opposed to spoken discourse, is detached from its authorial creator before it reaches its audience.[16] In the process of writing, the author may adopt a number of roles and postures which may not coincide with his or her real self, but which are created for specific

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[15]Robert E. Hegel, "An Exploration of the Chinese Literary Self," in Hegel and Richard C. Hessney, eds., Expressions of Self in Chinese Literature, New York: Columbia University Press, 1985, p.3.

[16]Lanser, p.116.

purposes. It is these authorial "postures" which aim to guide the reader to the ideologically "correct" reading of the text.[17]

Booth's preference for the term "implied author" above "authorial voice" indicates that the reader has not only the sense of a speaking voice, but of a total human presence, governing a literary work.[18] The implied author is a construct inferred and assembled by the reader from all the components of the text. It is perhaps best considered not as a person but as pointers to the "correct" reading of the text which the author has encoded into the work. The authorial voice therefore becomes not dissimilar to a set of conventions which combine to permit the message in the text to be communicated from the author to the reader.

6.2.1 The authorial voice in Chinese literature.

As Robert E. Hegel has suggested, the individual identity of the authorial presence in Chinese literature is specified by "reference to the greater human context" of the time.[19] The author's presence may be in the guise of an exemplary character or narrator whom the reader is expected to uphold as "close to the ideal."[20] This exemplar is found at the intradiegetic level of the narrative and is commonly associated in some way with the author. The storyteller-narrator is perhaps the best example of this. The author's presence is, as has been argued here, more accurately perceived as residing at the extrafictional level of the narrative. In this way, the

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[17]Lanser, p.117.
[18]Abrams, p.157.
[19]Hegel, "An Explanation," p.6.
[20]Hegel, "An Explanation," p.13.

author replaces his or her consciousness with the ideology to be promoted in the text. He or she is then better disposed towards using the assumed values and beliefs as a controlling force throughout the text.[21]

In the post-May Fourth period the distinction between authorial and narrative voice in Chinese fiction remained somewhat blurred. In the fiction of the late 1920s the author was generally "highly visible," commonly in the guise of an authorial narrator.[22] This concurs with an argument voiced by the author and critic Mao Dun in 1928 that "a successful literary work conveys not just the author's observations but the author's personality (gexing) as well."[23] While writers such as Ye Shengtao strove to eliminate self-reference in their fiction, the desire of post-May Fourth writers to adhere to a high degree of sincerity in the name of realism resulted in an overuse of "poorly digested autobiographical materials."[24] There was indeed a common assumption among the Chinese readership that the majority of first-person narratives - especially in the case of female narrators - related the life experience of the real author.[25] Furthermore, as Henry Zhao has pointed out, the overt characterization of the narrator into the personality of the author gave the May Fourth writers an opportunity to "enjoy" this self-identification.[26]

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[21]Abrams, p.157.
[22]Birch, p.403.
[23]Mao Dun, "Xin wenxue yanjiuzhe de zeren yu nuli" (The Responsibility and Striving of the Researchers of New Literature), Xiaoshuo yuebao (Fiction Monthly), 10 October 1928, p.31.
[24]Anderson, p.45.
[25]Robert E. Hegel, "Political Integration in Ru Zhijuan's 'Lilies'," in Theodore Huters, ed., Reading the Modern Chinese Short Story, Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1990, p.110.
[26]Zhao, p.61.

In pre-modern Chinese classical (i.e. wenyan as opposed to vernacular) writing the conventional nomenclature demanded that the author authenticate the material he or she presented to the reader through a series of proofs offered by the narrator of the text. In Tang dynasty "romances " (chuangi), for example, the narrator commonly assumed a name identical to that of the author.[27] In May Fourth fiction too this necessity to authenticate the material most frequently took the form of having the narrator be identified with the author often called by his or her own name.[28] It has also been documented, however, that many 19th century British critics similarly equated the first-person narrator with the biological author.[29]

In Chinese fiction of the 1920s it is probably in the fiction of Yu Dafu that the authorial persona has been identified most closely with the narrator. Yu's fictional world is perceived almost exclusively through the prism of the feelings of the narrator, who is generally identified with the author himself.[30] Invoking the concept of the "intentional fallacy", Michael Egan writes that "excessive identification" of author with protagonist in Yu Dafu's stories is a "commonly held but incorrect opinion."[31] This basic misunderstanding has arisen because critics have failed to differentiate betweeen Yu Dafu the real author and his implied self which is brought

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[27]The persistence of the narrator's self-identification with the author in wenyan fiction is so pervading that "historians can verify the authorship by finding the narrator's fictional name in the story." (Zhao, p.49).

[28]Granat, p.140.

[29]Lanser writes especially of 19th century criticisms of Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre (p.23).

[30]Slupski, p.4.

[31]Michael Egan, "Yu Dafu and the Transition to Modern Chinese Literature," in Merle Goldman, ed., Modern Chinese Literature in the May Fourth Era, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977. p.311.

into being through interpretation of the text. The sentimental overtones of many of Yu's early short stories are not indicative of the author himself, but point to the persona he adopts to mediate his fiction.

In the aftermath of Mao Zedong's "Yan'an Talks", the author's "personality" was almost completely effaced from literature. The authorial voice governing texts was more readily identifiable with a certain ideological stance than with the markers of a particular author's style. In order to maintain the dominance of the authorial voice, the voices of all narrators and characters within a text had to be subordinated to it. Literature in the Maoist era was necessarily "monologic". Subordination of all voices in the text to an "authoritative discourse" served to control both the purposes of the author and the responses of the reader. Voices other than that attributed to the author may disrupt or undermine the authority of the author's single voice.[32] Fiction created in the Maoist era was therefore constructed so that the author's voice, which served to present the official interpretation of events in the text, dominated above all other voices.

Theodore Huters has written of the "univocality" of the authorial presence in 20th century Chinese literature.[33] Univocality may be defined as only allowing one interpretation of events, and therefore contrasts with ambiguity. In his "Yan'an Talks" Mao advocated that all ambiguities of interpretation be eradicated from Chinese literature. This prescription of

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[32]Abrams, p,231. The term "monologic" was coined by the Soviet critic Mikhail Bakhtin in Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics (1929) as part of his theory that a literary text is a site for the dialogic interaction of multiple voices and modes of discourse.

[33]Huters, "Lives in Profile," p.271.

univocality in effect amounted to the establishment of an authoritative narration which could be employed to infuse a didactic content into literature. This narration was to be governed by an omnipresent and omniscient authorial voice which would be able to manipulate all possible responses on the part of the reader. Huters continues his discussion of univocality in the following manner:

> [Univocality is] an impassive authorial voice determined not to dilute its control over a given text and all other voices, both actual and potential, within it. This voice carefully arranges ideas and opinions within its texts so that a particular notion or group of notions emerge from the rhetoric of each story marked as unambiguously correct.[34]

A work of literature may never achieve monologic totality. In the narrating of a character's utterance, the authorial presence may never successfully avoid being double-voiced. Firstly, the author's own accent and inflection may be distinguished in the reported words of others. Secondly, the author's discourse may alter or contest with the speech it reports.[35] However, the dominance of Maoist Discourse over literary creation in the PRC from the 1940s until the 1980s ensured that the authority of the voice in the text was very rarely, if ever, flouted.

6.2.2 Authorial presence in short stories from 1979.

According to Susan Lanser, in the absence of textual marking suggesting the contrary, it may still be a fair assumption on the part of the reader to

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[34]Huters, "Lives in Profile," p.271. "Univocality", as it was originally defined by Bakhtin, referred to the seeking of a direct and unmediated expression of authorial individuality in the stylistic phenomenon of writing.
[35]Abrams, p.231.

accept the narrator as the implied author of the text.[36] This view is particularly relevant with regard to Chinese literature where the role of narrator has always been seen as very close to that of the implied author or even the real author. These textual markings may include naming the narrator with a separate identifier from the author's name, a change in gender or historical setting, or even the use of multiple narrators. Conversely, the single authorial voice governing the narrative might not be a single real author in the ordinary sense, especially where that narrative is written by two or a number of real authors.[37]

During the Cultural Revolution it was especially important for fiction to present an authoritative view. A number of short stories were created by writing groups consisting of a number of authors collaborating under a single pseudonym. If the authoritative voice in these stories was construed as "counterrevolutionary", it might lead to persecution, imprisonment or even death. Writing on the short story in the Cultural Revolution era, Sun Li comments that it took a considerable length of time for a collaborative group of writers to produce a single work and to ensure that its authorial voice promoted the "correct" authoritative stance:

> We did not write on our own. Someone came up with an idea and then we all got together to discuss it and add to it. We had to include everything. There were the "three prominences" [san tuchu] and the "three set-offs" [san peichen] and the "three adversaries" [san duitou]... this took a very long time. You were lucky if you published a story every six months.[38]

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[36]Lanser, p.49.
[37]Chatman, p.149.
[38]Sun Li, p.95.

A number of the 1979 short stories under review are written by two or more authors in collaboration. The authorial presence in these stories is undeniably monologic. It communicates through a single voice, thereby rendering insignificant, at least on a narrative level, the fact that more than one real author has written the story. In both "Hujiang xing" (Song of the Brave General) by Shao Wu and Hui Lin,[39] and "Meijiu xianhua" (Fine Wine and Fresh Flowers) by Xin Ruzhong and Li Chengcai,[40] a single first-person narrator is used to augment the authority of the dominant voice in the narrative. The narrator in both stories is omnipresent and exhibits a degree of omniscience beyond his apparent field of vision. He remains in both cases an anonymous eye-witness of the events he recounts, having no name and participating minimally in the action. He tells the story not of himself but of another: an elderly military commander and a young soldier respectively. The experience of the character totally eclipses any experience the narrator may have had. The use of a single narrative voice ordering, selecting and commenting upon the events in the plot renders it indistinguishable from the authorial voice.

The implied author using a first-person narrator is different from the real author engaging in self-reference. As Wallace Martin has argued, there is a distinction between the first-person authorial narrator and the first-person narrator who is usually different in obvious ways from the person who did the writing.[41] In a number of the short stories in the database, the author attempts to indicate that a first-person narrator should not be

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[39]Renmin wenxue, January 1979, pp.26-36.
[40]Renmin wenxue, May 1979, pp.75-80.
[41]Wallace Martin, p.135.

identified with himself. The convention in post-May Fourth fiction of the narrator being almost transparently identifiable with the author is not so apparent here. In Kong Jiesheng's "Dongdang de qingchun" (Turbulent Youth), for example, the first-person narrator's identity is distinguished from the author's when another character refers to him through dialogue as Xie Yonghui.[42] Similarly, in Han Shaogong's "Yuelan" (Yuelan) the narrator is referred to as Comrade Zhang, thereby denying a direct connection between the narrator and his creator.[43] Information gleaned from outside the fictional narrative about the life experiences of the two authors suggests that there may be a certain degree of autobiographical input into the narrators. While the narrators are clearly not intended as fictional representatives of the authors, their life experiences have followed similar lines. The narrator Xie Yonghui is an urban factory worker who has previously endured several years of rustication, while the author Kong Jiesheng was an operative in a Guangzhou lock factory following his return from several years of labour on a state farm on Hainan Island. The narrator Comrade Zhang is an "urban kid" (chengli yazi) rusticated to a rural unit, while the author Han Shaogong, born in the city of Changsha, was rusticated to Miluo County in his native Hunan Province as a teenager. Although it would be implausible to argue this point to any great degree, the narrative voices in the short stories may be seen to speak the language of their creators to a considerable extent.[44]

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[42]Zuopin, January 1979, pp.11-17.
[43]Zuopin, April 1979, pp.30-37.
[44]It is important to emphasize that authorial biography should not be inferred from the text alone, although interpreting a text in the light of biographical information acquired from outside that text may be justified. Monroe Beardsley has argued this point succinctly: "The speaker of a literary work cannot be identified with the author - and therefore the character and condition of the speaker can be known by internal evidence

What effect do these apparently autobiographical inflections on the first-person narrative have on the authoritative voice in the text? Firstly, although any direct correlation between author and narrator cannot be seen as empirically plausible, the Chinese writer has always been burdened by the necessity to authenticate the veracity of his or her writings. This has tended to manifest itself in autobiographical references in the text.[45] While Kong Jiesheng and Han Shaogong may not wish to have their narrators perceived as representations of themselves, the mimetic requirements of "realism" necessitate that the experiences and perceptions of these narrators closely resemble those with which the authors are familiar. Secondly, these narrators are more than peripheral participants in the story. Although they recount at length the experiences of others - a young girl embittered by the treatment of her parents at the hands of Red Guards and a terminally ill peasant woman who commits suicide rather than burden her family - their actions and comments, either as characters within the story or as narrators, uphold an authoritative interpretation of the text.

The relationship between author and narrator is evident in "Wo ai meipian lüye" (I Love Every Green Leaf) by Liu Xinwu.[46] The narrator is referred to constantly as Peng, indicating that he is not Liu Xinwu. His life experience, however, is more than coincidentally similar to that of the author. Both are teachers, having qualified and taken up the profession in the mid-1960s. Both are based in Beijing. Both suffered a period of

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alone unless the author has provided a pragmatic context, or claim of one, that connects the speaker with himself." (Aesthetics, New York, 1978, p.240; quoted in Chatman, p.147).

[45]Granat, p.140.

[46]Renmin wenxue, June 1979, pp.100-7.

persecution in the early stages of the Cultural Revolution. Finally the narrator's age, to which he refers in the story, is similar to that of Liu Xinwu.

Peng, with his occasional asides to the reader, often becomes a storyteller-narrator intruding into his own narration. For example, the main narrative commences with: "I want to introduce you to someone" (100). The storyteller presence is generally made clear when, during the course of a third-person omniscient narrative, the narrator adopts a first-person pose and addresses the audience directly. In "I Love Every Green Leaf" the narration is mediated in the first-person. However, direct second-person references to the reader by the narrator show that, like the storyteller, he is able to step momentarily outside the narrative. The storyteller is not the implied author, for it is the implied author who has decided to include occasional comments from the storyteller in the fabric of the narrative. However, it is through the storyteller pose that the implied author's function most closely approaches that of narrator. Indeed, Wallace Martin defines authorial narration as a narrative in which an implied author, referring to himself or herself in the first person, recounts a fictional story in which he does or does not appear.[47]

At the very outset of the narrative Peng makes it clear that he is the chairperson of the "teaching and research group" at the school where he works. The fact that he is the chairperson of an official organization to which many of the characters in the story, as teachers, are answerable,

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[47]Wallace Martin, p.135.

lends a greater authority to the events he recounts. Furthermore, the frame narrative concerns Peng's chairing of a meeting where he is determined to prove to his disbelieving colleagues that Wei Jinxing, a teacher at the school, is more morally and ideologically upright than any of them. Throughout the main narrative Peng describes Wei in a sympathetic light. On one occasion he admits that Wei "really inspired [qifa] me" (101), and on another he elicits reader sympathy for Wei by saying: "Actually, Wei Jinxing is really deserving of our pity [lianmin]" (105). This positive view of Wei is maintained throughout the narrative, and, on occasion, is mediated through Maoist Discourse: "Wei Jinxing was exemplary in throwing himself into the battle [zhandou] to rectify [zhengdun] the style [fengge] and quality of teaching [in our school]" (104). Having cast Wei in a sympathetic light and having guided the reader towards adopting a perception of Wei similar to that of his own, Peng structures the conclusion of his narrative in order to justify the sympathetic tone of that perception. The fact that, in the closing paragraphs of the story, Wei is elected onto the committee of the "teaching and research group", serves to strengthen the authority and accuracy of Peng's narration.

Wang Meng's novella "Buli" (Bolshevik Salute) has been described as an exercise in autobiography which provides the reader with "the key to understanding" Wang's creativity.[48] Without doubt the life experiences of the author are reflected in those of the protagonist Zhong Yicheng. The psychological musing of Zhong Yicheng, although juxtaposed in an

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[48]Liu Mengxi, "Wang Meng de chuangzuo he xinshiqi wenxue fazhan de quxiang" (Wang Meng's Writing and the Development Trend of New Period Literature), quoted in He Xilai, p.535.

achronological manner, is conveyed to the reader by an intrusive narrator rather than through his own thought associations.[49] This move ensures that the authorial and narrative voices in the story concord so that the narrator's accent is determined by the thoughts and words of the author. The dominant authorial voice focuses the reader's attention on the ideological message in the text. If the message was not so pervasive, this dominance may become diluted while the reader puzzled over the complex rhetorical features of the story.

Some authors choose to separate the identity of their narrators from themselves. The narrator of "Xue wang xinli liu" (Blood Flows into the Heart) is a young girl named Yulan and clearly not the male author Jiang Zilong.[50] Other authors render the distinction between author and narrator less cleaerly. For example, the first-person narrator of the extensive frame narrative of Wang Jiabin's "Shuipingjiao" (Horizon Reef) is referred to in the text as Old Wang.[51] Whether the narrator Wang is to be identified with the author Wang remains unclear. The latter chooses not to make explicit the distinction between himself and his narrator by using the same identifier. It is also perfectly plausible that Wang Jiabin, like his narrator, was at one time a newspaper reporter, thereby attesting to an autobiographical element in the story. In the absence of a detailed biography of the author, however, such a supposition would be mere conjecture.

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[49]Tay, "Wang Meng," p.11.
[50]Renmin wenxue, September 1979, pp.27-39.
[51]Renmin wenxue, April 1979, pp.83-93.

Regardless of the relationship between author and narrator, the authorial voice in most of the short stories from Renmin wenxue and Zuopin in 1979 presents the official ideological line. This domination is found primarily in the persona of the narrator who serves as the vehicle for didactic edification. The first-person eye-witness narrator of "Song of the Brave General" concludes his narration by pointing out that although the military commander is elderly and weak, his "enthusiasm" (xing) is "great" (nong) and his "ambition overflowing" (zhi migao) to achieve the Four Modernizations.[52] The first-person participant narrator of "Yulan" draws his narration to a close by stating unequivocally that "the survival and development of our great socialist nation" depends on the efforts of "labouring women" like the eponymous heroine.[53] The third-person omniscient narrator of "Chunfeng chui yousheng" (The Spring Breeze Shall Blow) uses the utterances of the forestry worker Huang Tiesheng to propagate the view that, now the Gang of Four have fallen from power, "we need to achieve the Four Modernizations" and "contribute to national reconstruction."[54] The mode and point of view of narration does not appear to affect the univocality of the authorial voice present in the text.

The presence of the authorial voice in the short stories published in Jintian in 1979 is more fractured and less dominant. The lack of an overlying ideological stance on the part of the implied author results in the dilution of a sense of authority governing the text. There is a definite rejection of the forms of authorial persona common in officially sanctioned

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[52]Renmin wenxue, January 1979, p.36.
[53]Renmin wenxue, April 1979, p.37.
[54]Zuopin, July 1979, p.14.

literature. Douwe Fokkema offers the following explanation for this type of phenomenon:

> Where ideological and political conviction have hardened to the point of obstructing efficient communication, literature may counter the inflation of the habitual ways of expression by introducing ways of communication... [which] offer an alternative to the established modes... and challenge their monopoly.[55]

While the "hardening" of ideological convictions has arguably served the "efficient communication" of the Party line in officially sanctioned literature, it has precluded any other mode of communication. The "messages" communicated by the short-storywriters contributing to Jintian failed to conform to the official line and were thus conveyed to the reader in alternative ways.

Many of the short stories in Jintian explore the thought processes of characters. These thought processes are either "quoted" verbatim or rendered in the form of reported "speech". The thinkers of these thoughts, although fictional constructs, are entities separate from the author and (in some cases) the narrator. The thoughts, instead of being subordinated to the ideological restraints of a dominant authorial voice, are generally mediated in the character's own idiom. This is particularly noticeable in stories rendered by third-person omnisicent narrators such as Cui Yan's "Lukou" (Intersection) or Wan Zhi's "Kaikuodi" (Open Ground) where the illogicality of characters' thoughts prevents the conveyance of a consistent message.[56]

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[55]Douwe Fokkema, "A Semiotic Definition of Aesthetic Experience and the Period Code of Modernism: With Reference to an Interpretation of Les Faux-Monnayeurs," Poetics Today, Vol.3.1 (1982), pp.66-67. Quoted in Bailey, p.96.

[56]Jintian, 2 (26 February 1979), pp.33-38; Jintian, 5 (September 1979), pp.55-58.

In Zhao Zhenkai's "Guilai de moshengren" (The Homecoming Stranger) the implied author, although sympathetic to Lanlan's suffering, is never entirely in agreement with her that her father is to blame for this suffering.[57] "He" arranges the dénouement of the story so that Lanlan eventually realizes that her father was as much a victim as she was. In other words, the character's perception of events comes to concord with that of the implied author. Rendering the narrative in the first person and from Lanlan's perspective may be seen as a deliberate move to weaken the dominance of the authorial voice. Her initial perception of events is, after all, at considerable odds to that of the implied author. Zhao's aim is not, however, to limit the reader's interpretation of his story to one possible reading. The voices of author and character-narrator are presented as equally valid.

Disruption of the authority of the author's single voice is carried to extremes in Zhao's novella "Bodong" (Waves). The novella comprises of a number of first-person narratives in the form of interior monologues and diary entries. The presence of not one but several narrating voices, the ideologies of which contradict and undermine one another, may be seen as totally engulfing the authoritative authorial voice. The "plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses" in "Waves" conforms to a "dialogic" narrative which contains "a genuine polyphony of fully valid voices".[58] It also emphasizes the subversive nature of the text.

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[57]Jintian, 2 (26 February 1979), pp.21-31.
[58]Quoted in Abrams, p.231.

6.2.3 The use of pseudonyms.

The use of pseudonyms is an important phenomenon and has "distinct implications" for the presentation of authorial status and for the conditioning of narrative point of view.[59] Most pseudonyms are intended to serve the writer's personal needs rather than to exert a great impact on the reading of the text. The use of pseudonyms has a long-standing tradition in both classical and modern Chinese literature. Many of China's pre-modern literati, especially poets, produced under their own names, under pseudonyms, or under "styles" (zi).[60] Writers of pre-modern vernacular fiction, on the other hand, almost never let their names be known to the public. This was doubtless because fiction enjoyed a very lowly status in the pre-modern hierarchy of literary genres. Moreover, the identity (and hence the personality) of the author became much diluted due to the custom of rewriting which dominated much of pre-Qing vernacular fiction.[61] By the late Qing writers would continue to use pseudonyms for their novels, probably out of respect to the convention of vernacular fiction.[62]

Although writers who began publishing in the post-May Fourth period commonly used their own names both as paratextual and intratextual markers, they also adopted pseudonyms (biming) which they used in all

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[59]Lanser, pp.126-7. The causes and implications of pseudonyms will of course vary with time, place and the individual writer's circumstances.

[60]The zi is something much more than an authorial pseudonym. It is a name taken at the age of twenty and one by which an individual is sometimes known both in public and private life.

[61]Zhao, p.188.

[62]Zhao, p.194.

their writings and by which they became known in the literary world. These writers adopted pseudonyms at a time when they were seeking to express a self in their fiction that was not apparent in their private lives. The adoption of a pseudonym, other than being a tradition among Chinese writers, also seems to be indicative of a trend among May Fourth intellectuals to reject all that was traditional, i.e. their names which had been chosen for them according to tradition, and to embrace that which was modern, i.e. a name of their own choosing. The pseudonyms selected also had a deeper significance. For instance, Shen Yanbing allegedly adopted the pseudonym Mao Dun, a homophone for "contradiction", in order to express his inner contradictions towards the CCP: his aim to pursue a faithful transcription of history was at odds with the official communist historiography.[63] The pseudonym Ba Jin, on the other hand, was composed of the initial and final characters in the Chinese transliteration of Russian anarchists Bakinin (Bajiening) and Kropotkin (Kelupaotejin). The adoption of Ba Jin as a pseudonym was thus a political statement on the part of the author.

In the periods immediately preceding and succeeding 1949 Chinese writers tended to use their own names rather than pseudonyms when publishing fiction. The individual element had been purged from the literary sphere and writers were, for the most part, unable to propagate views other than the official norm in their fiction. There was no perceived danger in this formulaic writing. Writers did not need to hide behind pseudonyms and sought prestige for themselves more readily by using their own names.

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[63]David Wang, Fictional Realism, p.26.

Major exceptions to this rule were those authors who published in nonofficial journals, in shouchaoben in the 1970s and even in a number of official journals during the Cultural Revolution. As publishing in the former two media was considered potentially punishable, writers were obviously eager to hide their identity behind pseudonyms.

One case in point would be the "underground" novel Di'erci woshou (The Second Handshake) which was widely circulated as a shouchaoben in the early 1970s. The novel was a blend of popular themes: love, counter-espionage and martial arts. It was not only circulated under a pseudonym, but the title of the novel changed as it was copied again and again by avid readers. The fifth manuscript found its way into the hands of the authorities in 1974 and was denounced by Yao Wenyuan as a "reactionary poisonous weed." Despite taking the prudent step to write under a pseudonym, the manuscript was eventually traced back to the author Zhang Yang. Zhang was imprisoned in January 1975, where he contracted TB and pleurisy, but survived to be exonerated and released some four years later. When The Second Handshake was eventually published under the author's real name in July 1979, the publishers had added several ideas of their own to render it more compatible with the official line.[64]

Even those writers publishing in official journals chose to change their names during the Cultural Revolution to indicate a break with the past and loyalty to the Cultural Revolution regime. It was dangerous to express views which might be construed as subversive by the authorities, and

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[64]Link, Mandarin Ducks, p.238.

writing under a pseudonym would protect the writer, at least initially, against denunciation. In the initial post-Mao era, when liberalization and autonomy was anticipated in the literary sphere, writers again began publishing works under their own names in official literary journals.

Many of the young writers contributing short stories to the nonofficial journal Jintian in 1979 operated under pseudonyms. On the whole, the editors of and contributors to the nonofficial journals of the early spring of 1979 openly publicized contact addresses and the names of contacts. The contact address for Jintian, for example, was a PO box in central Beijing under the name of Liu Nianchun. This contact name may of course have been a shield behind which the editors hid, a person named Liu Nianchun not actually existing. Nonetheless, the young writers preferred to publish under pseudonyms rather than using their own names.

The publication of the "political fantasy" (zhengzhi huanxiang) "Keneng fasheng zai 2000nian de beiju" (Tragedy Which May Occur in the Year 2000) in the nonofficial journal Beijing Spring exemplifies the need for the writer of a potentially subversive work to adopt a pseudonym.[65] The story, published under the pseudonym Su Ming, brought the thinking of Beijing Spring's editorial board into a more radical phase. Instead of embracing the journal's overtly reformist philosophy, the story points to a dystopic view of the future as a result of the failure of the Deng regime to implement democratic reforms in the late 1970s. Despite official attempts to root out

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[65]Beijing zhi chun (Beijing Spring), 5 (16 May 1979), pp.32-41. Bi Hua has defined "political fantasy" as a combination of news reportage (the systematic portrayal of real-life events), political commentary (the author's political view pervades the work) and fiction (p.27).

the author for denunciation, the identity of the person behind the pseudonym Su Ming may never be known. Andrew Nathan, who interviewed him in 1988, writes:

> ... [H]e was never identified by the police. He had written under a pseudonym and was unknown to his colleagues among the democratic activists. The investigation into his case remained active, but he continued to serve in a trusted position in a central Party organ.[66]

Zhao Zhenkai contibuted literature to Jintian under no less than three pseudonyms, two for fiction and one for poetry. There are interesting differences between the fiction-writer who writes as Shi Mo or Ai Shan and the poet who writes as Bei Dao. This may result from differing approaches to differing literary genres. However, that the author should choose different pseudonyms when writing in different genres attests to the different presence his persona casts over each. Zhao the novelist may be seen as "an observer of spiritual sterility" perceiving the "viler aspects of existence," especially those connected with moral corruption. Zhao the poet has been described as "a traveller in search of spiritual solace" who is often impeded in his quest by the moral corruption prevalent in society.[67]

Chen Maiping, who contributed the greatest number of short stories to Jintian between 1978 and 1980 (a total of six), always wrote under the pseudonym Wan Zhi. Chen has used the two components of the first

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[66]Andrew Nathan, China's Crisis: Dilemmas of Reform and Prospects for Democracy, New York: Columbia University Press, 1990. p.3.

[67]Cooke and McDougall, p.123. The two facets of the author may run into each other to add to Zhao Zhenkai's complex twofold "personality". As Cooke and McDougall write: "The two sides overlap: in the bitter edge of despair which surfaces in the poems like a reef at low tide, and in the tenderness which informs the rare moments of shared love in a lifetime of rejection and betrayal."

character of his given name to form a duosyllabic pseudonym. Gan Tiesheng likewise contributed two short stories to Jintian under the pseudonym Tian Ran. A number of authors contributed just one short story to Jintian under a pseudonym (Tie Bing, Shu Sheng, Jin Shui etc). Not only have the true identities of these authors never been made public, but the pseudonyms themselves have apparently never appeared elsewhere.

In post-Mao China an author's adoption of a pseudonym resulted from political factors. Especially in the case of writers publishing in nonofficial journals, writing under a pseudonym could afford a certain amount of protection should their works be denounced as subversive. It is unclear whether writers contributing to official journals wrote as themselves or under pseudonyms. In the absence of biographical information on each of them it would be impossible to make that distinction. As their works were published officially, they would have been obliged to toe the official line in order to achieve publication. There was not, therefore, political pressure upon them to conceal their true identity.

6.3 MODES OF NARRATIVE DISCOURSE

The narrator, the imagined voice transmitting the story in a narrative varies according to his or her participation in the events. Traditionally this participation has been apprehended as either limited or unlimited, and may be recounted from the first-person or the third-person point of view. However, merely observing that a story is recounted in the first or third person "will tell us nothing of importance unless we become more precise

and describe how the particular qualities of the narrators relate to specific effects."[68]

Analysis of the narrator's transmission of the narrative may be conducted from three angles: determining the identity of the speaker; clarifying the vantage point from which he or she speaks; and, perhaps most importantly, defining the channels of discourse employed by the speaker. This brings into play the distinction, if any, the narrator makes between mediating his or her own thoughts and feelings, and mediating the thoughts and feelings of his or her characters. First-person narrators may, for example, recount past events in their lives or represent their present consciousness as in a form of interior monologue. Third-person narrators may describe the contents of their characters' minds either in the language of the character - whether quoted directly or indirectly - or mediated in the language of the narrator.

The thought and speech of characters may be rendered directly, as in the quotation of a monologue or a dialogue within quotation marks, or indirectly, as in reported speech. These narrative modes may also be presented in what has become known as the "free" form, that is, they are shorn of all conventional orthographic cues (i.e. quotation marks and introductory phrases such as "he thought/said [that]...").

In pre-19th century Western fiction a character's thought processes were rarely revealed directly. Indirect exposure of these inner selves was

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[68]Booth, p.150.

commonly conducted though spoken language and telling gesture. By the end of the 19th century, however, it became common practice among novelists to quote thoughts in the same manner as quoting speech.[69] Placing the thoughts of a character into quotation marks and treating then as a kind of "unspoken speech" has been described as the "most obvious and direct means" of rendering these thoughts in narrative fiction.[70] More recently the orthographic tags have also been removed from the text, resulting in the free direct form. The marriage of these forms later became a hallmark for so-called "stream of consciousness" novels.[71]

More important than the altered appearance of narrative in the free direct form are the grammatical clues which mark its presence.[72] These clues may be signified by five criteria: the character's self-reference is always in the first person (i.e. She looked at her watch. I have to leave); the thoughts are always rendered in the present tense (i.e. She looked at her watch. I have to leave); the language is identifiably that of the character; any allusion to the character's experiences are not elucidated; and there is no presumptive audience. The free direct form is the most common narrative form used to mediate interior monologue, where the narrator creates the illusion that what is rendered are the actual thoughts

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[69]Cohn, p.21. Cohn singles out the fiction of Dostoyevsky as particularly indicative of this trend.

[70]Chatman, p.182.

[71]Cohn, p.63. James Joyce's experimental novel Ulysses (1922) was the first, and arguably the most radical, example of the fusion of the free direct form and the surrounding narrative text.

[72]Cohn also points out that the altered appearance of dialogues "tends to make us forget that the most telling grammatical signs for distinguishing between report and monologue are common to Joyce and to earlier novelists..." (pp.62-3).

the character "thinks" to himself or herself.[73] The thought and the words in which it is expressed must therefore be identical.

A character's thoughts may also be rendered in the indirect, usually the free indirect, form. In this type of interior monologue, an omniscient third-person narrator presents unspoken material "as if it were directly from the consciousness of a character" and "with commentary and description [which] guides the reader through it."[74] The free indirect form represents the character's mental discourse in the guise of the narrator's discourse. It is a technique in which the narrator's discourse interferes with the character's discourse. Using the language a character employs when talking to himself and presenting that language in the grammar the narrator uses in reference to that character cannot but superimpose the two voices which remained separate in the direct forms.[75] While the thoughts themselves are formulated in the consciousness of the character, the words on the page are not identified as such, but belong to the language of the third person. Dorrit Cohn makes the concise point that the free indirect form - "quoted monologue" as she terms it - "may be most succinctly defined as the technique for rendering a character's thought in his own idiom while maintaining the third-person reference and the basic tense of narration."[76]

The free indirect form may be recognized by a number of signals: the grammatical person of the surrounding narrative is followed in the rendering of thoughts; the character's discourse has different deictic

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[73]Chatman, p.182.
[74]Hagenaar, p.19.
[75]Cohn, p.105.
[76]Cohn, p.100.

characteristics (i.e. the point of reference depending on position in place and time of the speaker) to the narrator's discourse; and there are a number of miscellaneous syntactic and semantic features, including "lexical fillers" (such as yes, no, well, of course, so) which are indicative of an ongoing internal exchange.[77]

6.3.1 Narrative modes in Chinese fiction.

Much of pre-modern Chinese fiction was recounted from the vantage point of an omniscient narrator. The mode of this narration was commonly in the third person. In non-vernacular (i.e. wenyan) literature first person, or at least autobiographical, narration was current in both essays and in narrative poetry.[78] In vernacular literature, through the device of the storyteller's manner, the narrator introduced himself in the story he was telling. Although all self-references are in the first-person, the events of the story themselves are not recounted from the first-person perspective.[79] This perspective is not used either for rendering the thoughts or monologues of characters within the story. However, the use of first-person self-references by a narrator engaged in a third-person narration does not indicate that the interpretation expressed is the author's own opinion. It has a mainly rhetorical function, presenting an abstract ideology as the author's personal conviction.[80]

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[77]Hagenaar, pp.20-25.
[78]Hagenaar, p.39.
[79]Idema, p.23.
[80]Doleželová-Velingerová, "Narrative Modes," p.66.

There is an inconspicuous grammatical distinction between the first and third person forms in the Chinese language. There is no indication of person in the verb and a tendency to omit pronouns. This may account for the paucity of theoretical works on narrative modes by Chinese literary critics.[81] The grammatical argument is deliberated by Zhao Yiheng in one of the first theoretical works in Chinese to discuss narrative modes in fiction, which appeared in 1987.[82] Zhao maintains that the grammatical conventions of the classical language also resulted in the dominance of the direct form over the indirect form in the expression of a character's thoughts. As the traditional language was devoid of markers of punctuation and paragraphing, it was necessary for "inner worlds" to be signalled by introductory phrases in the text. "Inner worlds" could also be revealed by changes in narrative form, for example, passages of poetry or excerpts from letters were used to allude to a character's mental processes.[83] The lack of verb tense in Chinese means that intrusion into the text on the part of the narrator is less clearly marked than in European languages.[84] In Chinese the narrator's text appears to be more important than the character's text it is mediating. An interesting comparison can also be made between classical Western literature (i.e. Greek and Latin) where the indirect form was already quite common, and classical Chinese literature which was unable to accommodate the indirect form.[85]

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[81]Doleželová-Velingerová, "Narrative Modes," p.57.

[82]Zhao Yiheng, "Xiaoshuo xushuzhong de zhuanshuyu" (Reporting Mode in Narrative in Fiction), Wenyi yanjiu, (Literature and Art Research), May 1987, pp.78-87.

[83]An early example of this might be Yuan Zhen's (779-831) "Yingying zhuan" (The Story of Yingying) in which Zhang Sheng and Yingying exchange letters consisting of poetry in order to express their inner feelings for one another.

[84]Hagenaar, p.47.

[85]Hagenaar, p.38.

Most observers tend to agree that the period of change in Chinese narrative modes occurred at the beginning of the 20th century. Examples of an individualized first-person narrator, who is a participant in as well as an observer of the events he or she narrates, may be found in Chinese fiction during the last decade of the imperial period. The fiction of Wu Woyao (1866-1910), especially Henhai (Sea of Woe, 1906) and Ershi nian muzhu zhi quaixianzhuang (Strange Phenomena Viewed over Twenty Years, 1908), marks the first appearance of, respectively, the indirect form and the first-person narrator in Chinese literature. This introduction of an "innovative" narrative stance is more the result of an internal development rather a direct influence from the West.[86] The use of baihua in creating literature afforded the writer the opportunity to express the thoughts and feelings of his or her characters in a more indirect manner than hitherto possible. Wu Woyao's fiction contains examples of "the blurring of lines between the narrator's text and the character's text," thus indicating the birth of the free indirect form in Chinese literature.[87]

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[86]Birch, p.41.

[87]Hagenaar, p.37. It may be argued, as Jaroslav Průsek has done, that Wu's transformation of the traditional narrator into a clearly defined speaker in the first person is not a "functional change": "We soon realize, nevertheless, that this is only a pose and that the author had no other aim in mind than to put together a collection of stories and anecdotes to captivate and entertain his readers... The persistent effort to create natural situations for one or another of the episodes strikes an artificial note. The author could certainly have dispensed with all these artificial settings and introductions had he really recounted his subject matter in the first person, or presented it as a series of disconnected incidents. It seems to have been impossible, however, to put such heterogeneous material in the mouth of a single narrator - the author..." ("The Changing Role of the Narrator in Chinese Novels at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century" in Leo Ou-fan Lee, ed., The Lyrical and the Epic: Studies of Modern Chinese Literature, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980, p.115).

Japanese fiction was also influential in determining the forms explored by modern Chinese writers. In the first years of the 20th century, many Japanese translations of Western philosophical and cultural terms were adopted by Chinese intellectuals searching for a new vocabulary to express new knowledge.[88] A concomitant of this was the sustained usage of Japanese grammatical and narrative innovation.

Chinese fiction of the 1920s was dominated by a new narrator, usually in the first person, whose individuality and personal experiences were tinged with autobiographical hues. While authors strove to eschew all directly autobiographical elements from their first-person narrators, readers and critics alike continued to view the author and his or her narrator as an inseparable entity (see 6.2.1). Nevertheless, an examination of first-person narratives from the 1920s reveals further examples of authors experimenting with new narrative modes. It was not uncommon for a single first-person narrator to recount the entire narrative. Narrators could be limited in perspective, which was a challenge to the omniscient objectivity of the storyteller-narrator. The subjectivity offered by such a narrative, where the narrator's experiences were couched in autobiographical terms, increased the authenticity of fiction aiming at social and political criticism.[89] While in pre-modern Chinese fiction a desire to authenticate the material presented depended upon proofs offered by the narrator, in fiction of the 1920s this frequently took the form of having the narrator identified with the author often called by his or her own name.[90]

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[88]Gunn, p.34.
[89]Hagenaar, p.152.
[90]Granat, p.140.

Post-Yan'an Chinese fiction witnessed a return to the portrayal of collective feelings and social order. The bringing back of a communal mode of narration resulted in the relinquishment of the individual style which had marked fiction in the 1920s and 1930s.[91] It is generally required of an author in the "socialist realist" mode to adopt the position of an omniscient narrator. This narrator would both organize and analyse the events of the narrative, providing them with "hermetic structure and definite meanings."[92] Fiction created according to the Maoist literary line was primarily aimed at imparting a didactic message. Previously in this study it has been argued that from the 1940s until the early 1980s stylistics in and structure of literature were subordinated to the presentation of the "correct" ideological stance. Narrative modes, insofar as they are subordinated to the overlying authoritative voice governing a literary text, may also be designed to present the "correct" view.

The first-person narrator is not frequently used in Chinese fiction between 1942 and 1979. Where it does appear, however, is in the form of storyteller-narrator or a secondary character recounting events to the narrator. These accounts are mediated by the omniscient third-person narrator of the texts in which they appear and, in turn, are subordinated to the texts' authoritative voices. The dominance of a single narrative mode renders much of this fiction somewhat monotonous, as Rudolf Wagner has pointed out:

> The great efforts of the text to establish the authenticity and credibility of the narrative voice in class, moral, and political terms are in reaction to a dramatic loss of the credibility of fiction among readers in the People's Republic. The experience of several decades

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[91]Anderson, p.201.
[92]Wagner, p.488.

> of a fiction more or less and very quickly reasserting the latest government assessments, a trend only (if greatly) exacerbated during the Cultural Revolution, has reduced the writer in the reader's mind to a protagonist telling the same story...[93]

The first-person narrator is, in short, an individual speaking. The reader hears the "voice" of this individual with all its personal touches and characteristic idioms. With the first-person limited narration especially, what is presented are the views of a personal narrator, rather than the authoritative voice offered by the omniscient narrator. By its very nature, a narrator with a limited view of events is unable to render with any degree of credibility the thoughts of the characters in the text. This may dilute the authoritative voice governing the text, for there is an inherent ambiguity in not subordinating all elements of that text to one standpoint. Failure to uphold this standpoint through the thoughts of characters, especially the main character, further adds to the dilution. The first-person narrator is often reduced to offering only a statement of what happened rather than being able to offer the officially "correct" explanation.[94]

Rendering the thoughts of a character in an unmediated manner, such as in the form of interior monologue, is equally as problematic in the Maoist context. The nature of unmediated thought presentation, whether directly or indirectly rendered, determines that it has not been ordered or selected by a narrator. The presentation of a character's "inner world," with its illogicality and the influence of subconscious musing, might seriously

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[93]Wagner, p.494. Wagner notes that the cynicism of some younger readers has become so extreme as to refer to writers as politicians.

[94]Wagner, p.488.

weaken the authority of the text. Marxist ideology maintains that individual consciousness is uncontrollable and therefore should not be rendered in literature in its unmediated form:

> Consciousness, in the Chinese view, is connected with Lenin's theory of reflection; it represents a reflection of reality, which is socially conditioned. Consciousness, in other words, is conceived as a product of the activities of man in society. Therefore it is viewed as the supreme force governing man's behavior, without any intervention by such forces as the unconscious.[95]

Interior monologue rendered in the direct and indirect forms is better able to accommodate an ideologically "correct" rendering of the quoted thoughts. Although the character's thoughts remain as quoted, the means by which the narrator introduces these thoughts, and qualification of the way in which the character reacts to these thoughts (i.e. she said angrily to herself; he thought happily that...) may colour the reader's interpretation of the "quoted monologue". In the free forms, especially the free indirect form, where a character's thoughts are presented shaven of all conventional orthographic cues, it is harder to interpret those thoughts acording to a particular ideological stance. It is perhaps for this reason that free indirect discourse was not a preferred mode of narration within the third-person narratives which dominated literature in the Maoist era.[96]

6.3.2 Narrative modes in short stories from 1979.

Rudolf Wagner has written of the paucity of the first-person narrator in contemporary Chinese fiction. His argument clearly maintains that this

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[95]Hagenaar, pp.51-2.
[96]Hagenaar, p.40.

paucity is especially applicable to post-1978 fiction.[97] Information based on the database of this study appears to contradict this assumption. Of the short stories published in Renmin wenxue during 1979, 23 of a possible 85 (27%) are presented by first-person narrators and 62 of a possible 85 (73%) by third-person narrators. For Zuopin the figures are similar: 15 of a possible 51 (29%) are presented by first-person narrators and 36 (71%) by third-person narrators. The figures for Jintian paint a different picture. The twelve short stories published in 1979 are divided equally between first and third-person narrators.

The traditional method of representing a character's thoughts in a third-person narrative is the direct form. The character's words are quoted or thoughts are vocalized as quoted speech, and preceded by markers in the text. Some of the short stories from 1979 present characters' thoughts in a similar manner, being introduced by stock phrases such as "he said to himself" (ta dui ziji shuo) or "she thought to herself" (ta xinli dao). This vocalization of thoughts by an omniscient narrator shares a similar function to the soliloquy, where a character's motives and state of mind are conveyed to the audience directly. The eponymous hero of "Meng Chun" (Meng Chun) by Wang Runzi expresses his inner grievances about his predecessor in the post of team leader in the following manner: "Meng Chun thought: 'Hm, old man, you're up to your old tricks again...'"[98] In Gao Xiaosheng's "Manchang de yitian" (The Long Day) the main character expresses his inner delight at having finally amassed evidence to condemn an immoral adversary: "'You've been caught out now...' Commune Secretary

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[97]Wagner, p.488.
[98]Renmin wenxue, December 1979, p.14.

Li Hesheng could not help thinking as he listened to Zhang Hezhen's appeal."[99]

This method of rendering a character's thought was very common in pre-modern Chinese fiction. More importantly, the omniscient third-person narrator enjoys cognitive privilege and is able to dip into the "inner worlds" of characters. Although Mao Zedong encouraged the depiction of literary characters through their actions, reflection of a character's mental processes was acceptable if it reinforced the "correctness" of that character's actions. Writers tended to reveal the inner workings of characters selectively and did so at appropriate moments in the plot to highlight that character's actions as "correct". In other words, the omniscient narrator is able to render and arrange the thoughts of the character to promote an ideology. The disparagement of adversaries by the main characters in the two above-mentioned stories serves to convey the message that the characters' actions are as upright as their adversaries' are underhand.

The narrator's selective handling of a character's thoughts to underline a message is perhaps more apparent where that character's thoughts are didactic in tone. In such cases it is not plausible to accept that authors and narrators have chosen to express their own opinions on moral issues by vocalizing their thoughts through the thoughts of their characters. The opinions expressed are those of the governing authority behind the text, to which the character's thoughts are ceded, rather than those of the real

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[99]Renmin wenxue, August 1979, p.18.

author. As Cohn has argued, quoted thoughts in a third-person context are "always more or less subordinated to the narrator, and our evaluation of what he says to himself remains tied to the perspective into which the narrator places him for us."[100]

It may be argued that in having their narrators and characters expound upon moral issues, authors are merely paying lip service to the powers that be. Such overt moralizing is commonly placed in the final paragraph of the text so as to create greater impact on the reader. In Zhang Xian's "Jiyi" (Memory), for example, the narrator concludes the story by rendering the main character's thoughts in the direct form: "Qin Muping said silently to himself in his mind: 'We Party people should indelibly carve onto our memories the errors and mistakes we have committed against the people.'"[101] Similarly, the narrator in Zhang Wu's "Chuzhang de nanchu" (The Section Chief's Difficulties) reveals the main character's thoughts in the final section of the story: "'How come I am able to show the masses every consideration for their hardships and yet the masses don't understand my difficulties?' He sighed as he thought, rubbing his hands and stamping his feet."[102] These quotations of characters' thoughts come across as carefully constructed devices aimed at augmenting the hortative intent of the text. The narrator does not so much "dip into" the character's "inner world" but fashions the content of that "inner world" to uphold the ideological message imparted to the reader.

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[100]Cohn, p.66. The "monologist" in a third-person context is therefore not the "uniquely dominant" voice in the text.

[101]Renmin wenxue, March 1979, p.19.

[102]Renmin wenxue, November 1979, p.93.

The free direct form, with its removal of the introductory markers and grammatical tags of the direct form, is a natural progression from the vocalization of thought. Thought processes rendered in the free direct form are common to short stories published in both the official and nonofficial journals under review. The narrator in Han Shaogong's "Yuelan", for instance, expresses in the free direct form the perceptions of a young cadre disillusioned with the peasants' lack of "socialist conscience" :

> This made him both angry and despondent. Heavens above! What can I do? With sweat streaming down his face, he hurried to see what help his colleagues in the working team could suggest.[103]

Translating the free direct and indirect forms from Chinese proves problematic as the verb tense is not indicated in the original. The fact that the young cadre's thought begins with an interjection such as "Heavens above!" (tian a) followed by an exclamation mark indicates that it is more likely to be his own language, rather than that of the narrator. The subsequent sentence must also be rendered in the free direct form as it is directly connected to the interjection and has no specific marker of person, which is a hallmark of vocalized thought. The function of the change in narrative mode here is to emphasize the young cadre's obvious inner anxiety which is manifested externally by his running to seek advice on the problem "with sweat streaming down his face."

The free direct form of narration is used in a number of official short stories to increase the sentimentality of the work. "Ganqing" (Feelings) by

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[103]Renmin wenxue, April 1979, p.90. The underlining here and elsewhere in this section is mine and has been added to emphasize the change in narrative modes.

Yu Ru is, from its title alone, a short story with sentimental overtones. The participant narrator is enlisted by a Chinese-American doctor he encounters at the airport to encourage his sister to join him in the States. The doctor uses the pretext that his mother, who has recently died, is still alive and has been asking for her daughter. In a passage where he addresses the sister in his mind, the narrator proves that he cannot bring himself to reveal the truth:

> Comfort? Ah! Oh Lin Yuming, presumably your brother used this excuse at first to urge you to go abroad. But how are you to know that it isn't comfort that awaits you abroad?! I couldn't tell her about it straight away.[104]

In "Zheshe zhi guang" (Refracted Light) by Zhang Xionghui, a short passage of the interior monologue of Tao Xiaoyu as she rejects the man she loves for the sake of her family is rendered in the free direct form:

> Him? Him!... Leave! Leave! I mustn't let him see me. It'll be too painful for him. Ah! No! No, I can't walk away. I have to have a good look at him! Even a glimpse. With convulsing hands she tore furiously at her own breast, leaving traces of blood on her snowy white skin.[105]

The pain and inner torment of love is a recurring theme expressed in the free direct form. Li Xiujuan, the main character in Chen Jinhong's "Ai de tianping" (The Scales of Love), is eventually consumed with guilt at having rejected her boyfriend Liu Jiecheng for an Overseas Chinese. One day she encounters Liu by chance in the street:

> Looking at his face, gaunt and tired through excessive labour, and his frail body, she could not help pitying him. What? It's him. He once gave me so much help! He's a good teacher, both in studying and in working. I once loved him and he loved me!... Even now he still cares for me. It's as if the split between us has never

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[104]Zuopin, August 1979, p.27.
[105]Zuopin, December 1979, p.20.

happened. He still smiles at me earnestly. His smile is so frank, He bears his inner pain so well - and it was I who gave him this pain. Oh, friend, how come you're not saying anything? Has your heart become numb? You should reproach me. Curse me. You have the right. The sky was gradually darkening.[106]

The excessive sentimentality of these characters' thoughts may be interpreted on a number of levels. Firstly, exaggeration, which is implicit in the overindulgent pathos and sympathy expressed here, has been identified as "one of the means of typification" in "socialist realism".[107] Secondly, sentimentalism, and its inherent emphasis on the elicitation of sympathy, are important factors in "developing social consciousness and a sense of communal responsibility."[108] Appealing to the reader's emotions and affecting them in a positive or negative manner would reinforce the moral stance adopted in a specific work. In "The Scales of Love", for example, Li Xiujuan's sentimental thoughts on Liu Jiecheng persuade the reader than she should be forgiven for her maltreatment of him. Booth contends that if an author wants intense sympathy for characters, "the psychic vividness of prolonged and deep inside views will help him."[109] The interior monologues of Li Xiujuan, and Tao Xiaoyu in "Refracted Light", are constructed to elicit reader sympathy towards their plights. Perceiving emotions through the eyes of characters renders the narrator redundant as an arranger of these emotions. The distance between text and

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[106]Zuopin, November 1979, p.18.

[107]Douwe Fokkema's remarks are quoted in Williams, "Stylistic Variations," p.63.

[108]Abrams, p.192. Abrams rightly points out "since what constitutes emotional excess or overindulgence is relative both to the judgment of the individual and to large-scale historical changes in culture and in literary fashion, what to the common reader of one age is a normal expression of human feeling may seem sentimental to many later readers" (p.93).

[109]Booth, p.337.

reader is thereby shortened and the reader's concern with the fortunes of the character enhanced.

A character's thoughts may be presented in more than one narrative form. On occasion, the free direct form occurs alongside narrative modes other than omniscient third-person narration. One such example is "Xingqiri" (Sunday) by Miao Ge, in which a middle-aged woman remembers the letter her former boyfriend sent her in 1957 urging her to give up her love for him:

> It [the letter] came too suddenly. It left her utterly mystified. What on earth has happened to Xiao Ren? Why doesn't he want me to go and see him?[a] One day, two days, three days... Xiao Song could not keep calm. "I simply must find you!"[b] she thought.[110]

In this passage are present the two styles of the direct form. The sentences marked [a] are rendered in the free direct form, for there are no introductory phrases or quotation marks, but the first-person references are clear signals of this narrative form. The sentence marked [b] is an example of vocalized thought, within quotation marks, and signalled with "she thought".

Another such example is Aode Si'er's "Hanlei de xiaosheng" (Tearful Laughter), where the change from the free indirect form to the free direct form in a passage referring to the anxiety of the main character Shen Jian is strikingly obvious:

> He [Shen Jian] just did not know how he was going to face Old Dad. Should he tell Old Dad about something so serious? No, he couldn't. It would be too much of a blow for Old Dad. But how could he avoid tomorrow's struggle meeting?[a] No matter what, I can't take part. I

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[110] Renmin wenxue, July 1979, p.89.

just can't go and struggle against Old Dad.[b] But Palamu's words were still reverberating in his ears...[111]

The first section of the passage (marked [a]) is clearly in the free indirect form. The representation of thought is rendered in the same anterior tense as the narrator's recounting of events. Moreover, the passage retains the third-person and contains the deictic expression "tomorrow" rather than "the next day" which would be expected in the narrator's language. The change from third-person to first-person narration marks the transition from the free indirect to the free direct form (passage [b]).

Elly Hagenaar draws the conclusion to her study on stream of consciousness and free indirect discourse in Chinese literature that the free indirect form occurs quite widely in early post-Cultural Revolution fiction.[112] Although this may be true of literature in general, analysis of the short stories in the database shows that the free direct form is favoured above the free indirect form. This distinction is perhaps not wholly applicable to the short stories published in Jintian.

A character's thoughts rendered in the free indirect form are arguably encroached upon by the narrator's discourse more than any other narrative mode.[113] Relaying these thoughts in the same "person" and in the same tense as the narration of the text as a whole superimposes the narrator's voice onto the character's thoughts. In order to avoid ideological ambiguity, the Chinese writer creating according to the guidelines established at Yan'an in 1942 structures his or her text so that the reader

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[111]Renmin wenxue, September 1979, p.61.
[112]Hagenaar, p.161.
[113]Hagenaar, p.19.

is "told" rather than "shown" what the character thinks. Merely "showing" a character's thoughts without "telling" the reader how to interpret them may dilute the message conveyed by the text. While characters' thoughts were commonly designed to uphold the ideological stance promoted within a literary work, presenting these thoughts without a narrator's introductory comments was seen as impairing the ideological clarity advocated by the Maoist line. The free indirect form is therefore underplayed by writers contributing short stories to Renmin wenxue and Zuopin in 1979.

Examples of the free indirect form do exist in short stories in the official journals, but not on as wide a scale as the free direct form. "Liu Zhuren" (Director Liu) by Cheng Yi, for instance, contains a number of passages in the free indirect form.[114] The story concerns Director Liu's coming to terms with the working style of the new Party secretary who is incorruptible and upright, and with the lackadaisical attitude he himself has shown in his work. The story deals with much introspection on the part of Director Liu and is structured to highlight the erroneousness of his thinking. Rendering Liu's thoughts in the free indirect form does not detract from the didactic stance of the story, because they clearly depict his failure to understand the situations in which he finds himself. Furthermore, use of the free indirect form maintains the narrative flow of the text:

> This old fellow had been to see him four times?! He really couldn't remember. However, it was fair to assume that leaders don't recognize the masses even though the masses recognize leaders. This old fellow actually seemed to recognize him, but pretended not to and swore to his face! What a sly old fellow! He was up to no good! But Director Liu was alert enough not to lose his temper (26).

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[114]Renmin wenxue, August 1979, pp.25-32, 72.

> How unlucky! The Secretary had been so angry yet how could he have forgotten the old villager's name?! He couldn't even remember which commune or which brigade he belonged to! Oh it was just too tense this evening. When the Secretary suddenly hit the table, what made him think it was directed at him? Actually, what did this have to do with him? Absolutely nothing (28).

The short stories published in Jintian were constructed to explore the psychological and thought process of characters in an innovative manner that was beyond the scope of writers publishing in official journals. Much of this exploration was conducted through the first-person narrative. Where the narrative was not designed to propagate a particular ideological message, the first-person narrator could bring a sense of individuality and subjectivity to his or her narration. In common with the writers of the May Fourth era, to whom the contributors to Jintian compared themselves, the narrating "I" in their fiction was a speaking form through which the writer revealed his or her presence.[115]

Those short stories rendered in the first person and published in Jintian contain a considerable amount of self-quoted interior monologue. In other words, the "narrating self" recalls the thoughts of the "experiencing self" from some point in the past and recounts them as though addressing the audience.[116] In Shi Mo's "The Homecoming Stranger", for example, the first-person narrator Lanlan, while recalling events surrounding her father's return from a labour camp, often recalls her own thoughts at the

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[115]Chen Maiping, "On the Absence of the Self: From Modernism to Postmodernism?" in Wendy Larson and Anne Wedell-Wedellsborg, eds., Inside Out: Modernism and Postmodernism in Chinese Literary Culture, Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1993, p.80.

[116]Cohn, p.144.

time, quoting them word for word, sometimes in a form similar to the free indirect form:

> The lamplight, the white lamplight rapidly swept across his neck and face, covered in wrinkles and scars. I was dumbfounded. Was this shrivelled old man him? Father? I listlessly leant against the door.[117]

More commonly, however, these thoughts are rendered in the equivalent of the free direct form. In the following passage, for instance, Lanlan quotes her mother's questions to her as speech, but relays her nonspoken replies to her mother in the form of untagged speech:

> "Don't cry, Lanlan."
> Cry? Mum, if I could still cry my tears would certainly be red, be blood!
> She patted me on the back: "Sleep a while, Lanlan. It will all pass."(24).

Wan Zhi's "Xueyu jiaojia zhijian" (In the Mingling Snow and Rain), on the other hand, reads as a representation of present consciousness.[118] In other words, the "narrating self" renders a passage of the "experiencing self"'s interior monologue in the present tense as though addressing him or herself, or as a transcript of the mind.[119] While it is difficult to ascertain the verb tense in Chinese, the context and the content narrated suggests that the action is unfolding as the narrator recounts it. In this way the narrator, a young man awaiting the last bus on an autumn evening, is able to blend his actions with his thoughts in a manner that flows smoothly. The opening sentences of the story, in which the narrator searches for the bus-stop in the dark, and which are complete with deictic references, attest to the presentness of the narration:

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[117]Jintian, 2 (26 February 1979), p.23.
[118]Jintian, 4 (20 June 1979), pp.74-6.
[119]Wallace Martin, p.140.

> I seem to remember there being a bus-stop here. Yes. Yes. It's where that woman's standing now, under that dim streetlamp. I'll walk over slowly to ask her... It must be here. I shouldn't be so stupid! This woman wouldn't be standing here for nothing. I should just stand here (74).

Unable to dip into the consciousness of the young woman who is also standing at the bus-stop, the narrator is forced to gauge her thoughts and feelings through the scant words she utters in response to his questions and offers.

The first-person narrative may also bring into question the reliability of the narrator, as is the case with "Qiang" (The Wall) by Tie Bing.[120] An unreliable narrator is one whose perception and evaluation of the events narrated do not coincide with the implicit opinions and norms manifested by the author, and which the author expects the reader to share.[121] The discrepancy between the unreliable narrator's view of events and the view that readers suspect to be more accurate creates a sense of irony. In other words, the narrator's view of the worlds differs from the true "reality" recognized by both author and reader.[122] Unreliable narration therefore effects a secret communion of author and reader at the expense of the narrator, or as Booth phrases it: "though the narrator may have some redeeming qualities of mind and heart, we travel with the silent author, observing the vicious driving behavior of the narrator seated in front."[123]

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[120]Jintian, 4 (20 June 1979), pp.17-21.

[121]Abrams, p.168.

[122]Baldick, p.234. The unreliable narrator is not necessarily (although may be) morally untrustworthy or a habitual liar, he or she could be just naive or ill-informed. There are unreliable narrators, however, who deliberately falsify their accounts from motives of vanity or malice.

[123]Booth, p.300. Booth points out that the reader has everything to gain from this secret collusion with the author, for not only is there pleasure in the collaboration, but also in deciphering the extent of the irony alluded to by the narrator's unreliability.

The impact of "The Wall" is heightened by the contradiction between the "cool, detached, unemotional" voice of the narrator and the actual content of the narration.[124] The story concerns the trial and execution of Yu Zhiqiang, the son of a factory worker who commits murder, as observed through the eyes of a young woman brought up in a cadre's family. Tie Bing's aim in writing the story is to highlight the hypocrisy of the official moral code, especial the breakdown in communication between those who make the code (the cadres) and those expected to abide by it (the workers). The judicious reader would appreciate the author's aim and collude with him in agonizing at the narrator's biassed view of the events she narrates. Not only is she prejudiced against Yu Zhiqiang due to his behaviour and the fact that her cousin is the judge who will mete out Yu's sentence, but she also appears unmoved by his execution, despite having known him since childhood:

> Of course, I saw Yu Zhiqiang executed, but I couldn't see that clearly. The crowd was angrily shouting slogans and then a gunshot rang out. I can remember the person next to me said humorously: "Will you look at that! His blood's red as well!"[125]

Those stories in Jintian recounted by third-person narrators favour the free indirect form for depicting the thought processes of their characters. In Wan Zhi's "Kaikuodi" (Open Ground), for example, the randomly arranged inner torment of the ex-KMT officer burying the bones of his dead comrades-in-arms in the middle of the night is conveyed in the free indirect form:

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[124]Wedell-Wedellsborg, "Chinese Modernism?" p.106.
[125]Jintian, 4 (20 June 1979), p.21.

> Not one of them would ever exist again. Why did they die? When did the value of these lives become lost? No, he couldn't answer. He ordered them about. He reprimanded them. He sent them to their death. Why did he do this? Today even he was not clear.[126]

The same narrative form is preferred in Cui Yan's "Lukou" (Intersection) to describe the disturbed mental state of Chen Pingping as she reminisces about and then encounters her former boyfriend:

> "Come back! Come back!"
> Suddenly her heart was filled with joy. It was him! She knew him too well. A dark and clearly angular face, and deeply sunken eyes which now appeared turbid. Only the stubble covering his two cheeks and the deep knife scars were unknown to her. But before her eyes...
> "Sister Ping, what is love?"
> "Love... What do you think?"
> "I, I don't..."
> No, this wasn't him. It couldn't possibly be him. He wouldn't do this kind of thing!... No, it was him...[127]

The free indirect form has been described as a "good medium" for writers to shape narratives dominated by characters' "fluid mental responses to momentary experience."[128] It is also effective for depicting a fictional mind "suspended in an instant present" between a remembered past and an anticipated future.[129] The ex-KMT officer's encounter with his past in the form of the bones of his former colleagues and Chen Pingping's encounter with her past in the shape of a former boyfriend may be interpreted as "momentary experiences" which cause each of them to reflect on their present and future circumstances.

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[126]Jintian, 5 (September 1979), p.58.
[127]Jintian, 2 (26 February 1979), p.35.
[128]Cohn, p.144.
[129]Cohn, p.126.

Assimilating the character's discourse into the narrator's discourse in the free indirect form emphasizes the narrator's omnipresence in the narrative. It also affords the narrator the opportunity to express an attitude towards his or her character. In both cases here, the character's perception of events is portrayed as being at odds with the narrator's perception - the latter being given the greater weight in the narrative. The reader identifies with the narrator's voice rather than the character's. This "collusion" between reader and narrator is not designed to create a sense of irony, but to elicit sympathy towards the character. Its usage is quite dissimilar in intent to the unreliable narrator of Tie Bing's "The Wall". The officer in "Open Ground" continually blames himself for the death of his comrades. The narrator's discourse, however, suggests that the officer is as much a victim of circumstance as those who died. In "Intersection" Chen Pingping's encounter with her erstwhile boyfriend awakens within her piecemeal recollections of his tender words to her. The narrator's negative physical description of the boyfriend and portrayal of him as associating with prostitutes alerts the reader to the fallibility of Chen's idealistic reminiscing.

6.4 CONCLUSIONS

The implied author, that is the voice governing both the presence of the author in a text and also the narrative modes adopted by narrators and characters, is the prime mover behind the message imparted by a work of literature. Jaroslav Průšek, quoting at length a passage written by Tolstoy in 1894, upholds this viewpoint when he writes: "The mortar which binds a work of art into one single unity and creates the illusion that it is a

reflection of life itself, is not the unity of characters and situations, but the unity of the specific relation between the author's conscience and his subject."[130]

Analysis of the short stories under review has shown that those in Renmin wenxue and Zuopin are presided over by a "univocal" implied author. Structuring a text so that all subordinate voices (i.e. those of narrator and character) underpin the authorial voice and, by extension, uphold the official ideological stance, is a necessary move to prevent the dilution of that stance. If literature was to serve as a vehicle for didactic edification in the manner Mao Zedong envisaged, all works had to be designed so that the authority of the authorial voice was never compromised and remained dominant regardless of who was speaking in the text.

The authorial voice in most of the short stories in Jintian in 1979 declines from establishing an authorial stance which the narrators and characters in those stories are expected to uphold. In other words, the reader was at relative liberty to determine the "message" of the short stories according to his or her own selective reading and interpretation of the events depicted. While it is prudent to remain mindful of Wayne Booth's contention that the author can never be totally effaced from his or her work,[131] the weakening of the dominance of the authorial voice ensured that the reader was not confined to a single possible reading. This "weakening" was accomplished by the use of unreliable narrators and the

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[130]Průšek, "Changing Role," pp.117-8.
[131]Booth, p.20.

presence of a "polyphony" of narrative voices, each of which was as valid as that of the implied author.

Polyphony was taken to an extreme through the use of multiple narrators in Zhao Zhenkai's novella "Waves". As the multi-narrative decentralizes authorial authority and transmits a fragmented message of ideology and values, its usage was fundamentally alien to the norms demanded of Marxist-Maoist literature. Although in the early 1980s Wang Meng vocally advised writers to move in the direction of "multiplicity" (duoyuanxing) of perspective, the multi-narrative is not evident in any of the short stories published in either official or nonofficial journals during 1979.[132] As far as authors contributing to nonofficial journals are concerned, the multi-narrative is better suited to the novella and the novel, rather than the relatively small scope of the short story.

In the short stories published in Renmin wenxue and Zuopin the omniscient third-person narrator predominates over the first-person narrator in an approximate ratio of 2:1. These short stories also contain frequent examples of interior monologue rendered by the direct and the free direct forms. On both counts these stories may be seen as continuing the predominant narrative modes of pre-modern Chinese fiction. Moreover, the use of an omniscient narrator serves to subordinate the thoughts,

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[132]Where the multi-narrative may be seen to exist is in the epistolary narrative. Although used in sections of the narrative of pre-modern fiction, the rendering of first-person narration in the form of letters only came to prominence in the 1920s. (Granat, p.123). There is, however, only one example of the epistolary narrative among the short stories under review. Wei Junyi's "Cankao ziliao" (Reference Material, Renmin wenxue, August 1979, pp.79-91) consists of a letter from a disllusioned Red Guard and the ebullient reply from his mother.

words and actions of characters to a prescribed norm. The individuality of author and narrator has been erased in favour of communal duty to the state. The parallel in suppressing the "I"-narrator between pre-modern and Marxist literature attests to "a fundamental continuity in the Chinese notion of the self as a fluid entity of not merely material proportions."[133]

The proportionately greater number of first-person narrators in the short stories published in Jintian is indicative of a change in narrative modes from both pre-modern and contemporary forms. At the same time an affinity may be seen to exist with the narrative modes used by authors in the post-May Fourth period. It may also point to an awakening of the individual self which was condemned as bourgeois by the Maoist regime. This awakening of the self was particularly prominent among those ex-Red Guards rusticated during the Cultural Revolution, especially those able to read about Western concepts of the self in those shouchaoben circulated in secret.[134] The writers contributing to Jintian were also at greater liberty to experiment with narrative modes other than the omniscient third person. Third-person narrators mediate characters' interior monologues in the free indirect form. While this form, as it appears in Western literature, is not a mark of modernity, the fact that it was only introduced into Chinese literature in the 1900s and was not "favoured" by writers in the Maoist era, renders its usage in this fiction, at least to a certain extent, as innovative.

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[133]Hegel, "An Exploration," p.13.

[134]Chen Maiping singles out a handcopied widely circulated version of John Morris, The Open Self, as particularly influential in urging the young intellectuals of the early 1970s to rediscover their selves and to write their own literary texts to present these selves. ("On the Absence of the Self," p.79).

In conclusion it may be argued that there is a difference in application of authorial voice and narrative modes between contributors to the official and the nonofficial journals. This difference results not from the aesthetics of literature but from the propagation of ideology. The voice of the implied author and the narrative modes over which it presides may be used to underscore a particular message. The message may in turn by upheld or subverted in order to establish a "univocality" or a "polyphony" of personae within the text.

Conclusion:
1979 - A Year of Continuity and Innovation in the Chinese Short Story

In 1979 the short story spearheaded an unprecedented increase in the publication of literature in the PRC. Whether in officially sanctioned literary journals or in the nonofficial literary journals of the Democracy Movement, the short story, by virtue of its brief creation and publication process, appears to be the form preferred by fiction writers. The analysis of the short stories under review in this study suggests certain conclusions in response to the questions posed in Chapter i. Do the short stories indicate a continuity in literary forms established in 20th century China, especially those of the Maoist era? Or do they indicate a new direction for Chinese literature, one marked by innovation and experimentation?

The degree of increased literary activity in the late 1970s is reminiscent of the Chinese literary arena of the early 1920s. Indeed, certain parallels may be presumed to exist between post-May Fourth and post-Cultural Revolution China. In both these periods writers sought to extricate literature from the shackles of prescriptive ideologies. As Ellen Widmer has argued, "it seem[s] reasonable to predict that a sustained comparison would confirm the impression of continuity and identify new links."[1] However, the findings of a conference on "Contemporary Chinese Literature and its

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[1]Ellen Widmer, "Preface," in Widmer and David Der-wei Wang, eds., From May Fourth to June Fourth: Fiction and Film in Twentieth-Century China, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993, p.ix.

Literary Antecedents" held in 1990 suggested that discontinuity, rather than continuity, prevailed.[2] For many of the would-be writers publishing short stories for the first time in 1979, the fiction of the 1920s and 1930s was not only part of history, but had also been largely unaccessible during the first three decades of the PRC. Despite orthodox Chinese literary critics' and historians' insistence that the origins of 20th century literature are to be found in the "realist" works of the post-May Fourth period, the diverse literary experimentation of the 1920s may well be indicative of "a small, though revolutionary, change within mainstream continuity."[3] In other words, this "mainstream" refers to the "collective" forms and didactic tones of literature common to both the Confucian and the Maoist literary canons. While it may be argued that the "critical realism" developed in the 1920s was restored in the late 1970s to counteract the "revolutionary romanticist" extremes of the Maoist era, the achievements of the short stories of 1979 might be better measured against their direct antecedents - the literature of the Cultural Revolution period.[4]

The key to understanding the orthodox PRC view of 20th century Chinese literary development must be Mao Zedong's "Yan'an Talks" of 1942. The "Yan'an Talks" assigned the birth of modern Chinese literature to the period following 1919. Although, according to Mao, the writers of this

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[2]The conference took place at the John King Fairbank Center for East Asian Research, 11-13 May 1990. (Widmer, p.ix).

[3]Leo Ou-fan Lee, "Afterword: Reflections on Change and Continuity in Modern Chinese Fiction," in Ellen Widmer and David Der-wei Wang, eds., From May Fourth to June Fourth: Fiction and Film in Twentieth-Century China, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993, p.361. Lee's article is by way of a review of Cyril Birch's essay "Change and Continuity in Chinese Fiction" (1974).

[4]Leo Lee, "Afterword", p.372.

period were essentially "petty bourgeois" intellectuals creating with an educated elite in mind as intended reader, their espousal of Marxist thought and their turn to the ideological left in the 1930s was indicative of the genesis of a "revolutionary literature." Literature, one of a number of means of promoting ideology, was perceived as having followed the same path of development as the Chinese socialist revolution. Following the founding of the PRC in 1949 and the adoption of the "Yan'an Talks" as the sole criterion for literary creation, literature became highly bound to, and even subordinate to, political development. Michael Egan has also contended that literary development in the PRC is not indicative of "natural generic growth", but results directly from changes in CCP policy as it is "imposed" from above.[5] During the Cultural Revolution, when not only literature of the post-May Fourth period, but also that of the 1950s and 1960s was denounced, the "Yan'an Talks" were still, albeit nominally, held up as a document worthy of study. In the immediate post-Mao period also the "Yan'an Talks" continued to be propagated as the most appropriate criteria for literary creation, thereby implying, in the official Chinese view, a further linear continuity in the development of 20th century Chinese literature.

After 1976 the view was propagated that during the Cultural Revolution the Maoist line had been usurped and distorted by the "leftist clique" supportive of the Gang of Four. The post-1976 political line was seen as a continuation of the line practised before "extreme leftism" took a hold in

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[5]Michael Egan, "A Notable Sermon: The Subtext of Hao Ran's Fiction," in Bonnie S. McDougall, ed., Popular Chinese Literature and the Performing Arts in the People's Republic of China 1949-1979, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984, pp.224-5.

1957. The literary line was also considered a continuation of the literary line advocated in the mid-1950s. Insofar as it promoted a return to "socialist realism" created to serve the people, the Chinese literary leadership of the late 1970s may be viewed as "restorationist."[6] The leadership also considered "literature of the scars" as indicative of a literary trend fundamentally different from that of the Cultural Revolution period. It may, however, be argued that the literary line of the Cultural Revolution was a continuation, albeit extreme, of the line advocated by Mao at Yan'an. In many respects "literature of the scars" was a continuation of the same literary line. It was subordinated to the political line in much the same way as the literature of the Cultural Revolution had been. If its content and message was different from that of Cultural Revolution literature, it only mirrored the changes in the political line.

Most of the short stories published in Renmin wenxue and Zuopin during 1979 exhibit a strong degree of continuity with the Maoist literary line. Most importantly, the short stories attest to the continued dominance of Maoist Discourse over the literary realm. The use of language evidenced in the short stories points to the subordination of literature to the political line. In comparison with the literature of the first three decades of the PRC, the short stories published in Renmin wenxue and Zuopin in 1979 exhibit no noticeable changes in use of language. The language of Maoist Discourse is structured to promote an ideology. In 1979 the basic tenets of that ideology remained unchanged from the 1940s. As a consequence, the language in officially sanctioned literature also remains unchanged.

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[6]David E. Pollard, "The Controversy over Modernism, 1979-84," China Quarterly, 104, 1985, p.641.

The structure of the official short stories under review also points to elements of continuity. This continuity extends further than the literature of the Maoist era to encompass many elements common to premodern vernacular fiction. While writers of the May Fourth strove to make a break with the strictures of premodern writing, the Maoist literary line has never shied from tapping the "rich reservoir of artistic ideas" of premodern fiction.[7] As Cyril Birch has written, there are a number of "traditional features underlying the surface newness" of post-1942 literature.[8] Moreover, the style and structure of Chinese fiction from the 1940s until the 1980s has "closely adhered to" the models of popular premodern novels and folklore oral texts.[9] The structural devices adopted from premodern antecedents include the storyteller's manner and the embedded narrative. These devices were used in the past to augment the didactic overtones in fiction. In post-Mao fiction they fulfil a similar function by continuing to promote the hortative prescriptions of the Maoist line.

Characterization in premodern fiction was indirect, that is, the characters revealed themselves through their actions. Although there was a move towards direct characterization with the increased use of techniques depicting the inner self in fiction of the 1920s, the "Yan'an Talks" once more advocated the delineation of characters through their actions. The "positive heroes of the socialist era" which dominated literary creation until the end of the Cultural Revolution saw the "type" being taken to extremes in order to portray the desired image of society under socialism.

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[7]Widmer, p.xi.
[8]Birch, p.394.
[9]Doleželová-Velingerová, "Understanding," p.36.

Characters in most of the short stories published in Renmin wenxue and Zuopin in 1979 are developed no further than representative types, rarely exhibiting any individual traits. This means of characterization fails to differ from premodern methods or those advocated by Mao in 1942, and therefore attests to continuity.

The example of establishment writer Wang Meng has been consistently cited to point to the possibility of innovation in short stories published in official journals. Although none of Wang's more experimental stories were published in Renmin wenxue or Zuopin in 1979, his role on the literary stage is too influential to be ignored. Despite his praiseworthy attempts at experimentation with the language and structure prescribed by Maoist Discourse, Wang Meng's fiction merely proves that a change in the superficial structure of a literary text does not necessarily imply a change in the promoted political view of an author, or the ideological message imparted in that text.

The anticipated differences between Renmin wenxue, a centrally controlled journal, and Zuopin, a provincial journal, have not emerged to any great degree. The demands on all official publications to toe the political line and to sanction the publication of literary works in support of the status quo appears to be too pervasive to allow anything more than subtle differences between the two journals. Zuopin was a very popular journal in 1979, primarily because of two controversial short stories it carried early in the year. It must be said, however, that these stories are not typical of the stories published by the journal throughout the year. The result of conservative attacks against controversial literature, most

importantly the article by Huang Ansi who was also based in Guangzhou, served to stunt the possibility of any further controversial stories being published. The anonymous letter from a reader in Sichuan published in Wenyi bao in July 1979, despite being effusive in its praise for Zuopin, expressed some reservations about the journal's content from later in the year: "All of us are of the opinion that the journal was 'worth reading' before March, but the content of recent editions from April and May are nowhere near as good as before."[10] The popularity of Zuopin may well have resulted from reputation rather than the actual short stories it carried in 1979.

Simon Leys has written that, in comparison with the politicized literature of the Maoist line, "genuine literature must... be created by social outcasts and political exiles, misfits who remain marginal to officialdom and alienated from the state."[11] The contributors to Jintian in 1979 were neither "political exiles" nor "misfits." They believed that the publication of nonofficial journals was constitutionally acceptable. Moreover, despite attempts by orthodox literary critics and historians to treat this fiction as marginal, Li Tuo has traced the origins of "rootseeking literature" (xungen wenxue) and "experimentalist fiction" (shiyan xiaoshuo) of the mid-1980s to the initial position of Jintian.[12] However, the innovations evidenced in the short stories in Jintian in 1979 were certainly indicative of a new direction for PRC fiction: one that emphasized aesthetics above politics.

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[10]Quoted in Liu Dawen, p.169.
[11]Simon Leys, Broken Images, London: Allison and Busby, 1979, p.43.
[12]Li Tuo, "New Vitality," passim. See also Leo Lee, "Afterword," p.375.

While the short stories published in Renmin wenxue and Zuopin adhere to the didactic function of literature persuading the reader to embrace a certain political cause, the short stories appearing in Jintian are not beholden to or created to extol any political standpoint. Although the failure to represent the accepted political standpoint must be seen as a political move in its own right, the absence of any inference to socialism as the panacea for all society's ills is itself an innovation in post-1942 Chinese literature. In direct opposition to "socialist realism", the contributors to Jintian engaged in "a powerful deconstruction of the Chinese realist paradigm by stripping away its most sacred tenets: its reflectionism, its linear narrative... its lifelike or positive characters, and above all its close and critical linkage with external social reality."[13]

Short-storywriters contributing to Jintian drew parallels between their literary "mission" and that of the young intellectuals of the May Fourth Movement. The editorial statement in the inaugural issue of the journal attests to this by claiming that the May Fourth Movement was bound "to establish the significance of everyone's existence" and to establish a literature which "reflected this deep and original nature."[14]

Analysis of the short stories under review has shown there to be a fundamental difference in the language of the works published in the official journals and those published in Jintian. The contributors to the latter embraced a new "discourse" which was not based on the Maoist line. The influences of Western literary creativity coupled with freedoms of

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[13]Leo Lee, "Afterword," pp.375-6.
[14]JPRS, No.74909, 11 January 1980, p.21

experimentation offered by the nonofficial journals may explain the tendency towards innovation in literary language practised by the writers. The innovation of this language is observable in a number of areas. Firstly, it is devoid of any politicization, upholding Jintian's standpoint that literature should be divorced from politics. Secondly, many of the short stories in Jintian are character-centred and depict the thought processes of characters in an elliptical and disjunctive manner. Thirdly, on occasion, the language in the short stories shares something in common with the "imagistic" language of Hermetic Poetry, for which the journal was perhaps most renowned.

The structural devices and narrative modes in the short stories in Jintian also evidence innovation. This again results from the character-centred nature of the stories which lend themselves better to disjunctive, achronological structure and other modern methods of representing thought in narrative (i.e. the dominance of the first-person narrator). The innovations striven for in these short stories are so pervasive that they permit only very rare cases of continuity in post-1942 fictional forms.

The overall conclusion may be drawn that 1979 was a year of both continuity and innovation in the Chinese short story. Short stories published in official journals exhibit elements of continuity primarily through the continued dominance of Maoist Discourse which itself had assimilated a number of elements from premodern fiction. Short stories published in Jintian exhibit elements of literary innovation. This fiction was not restricted by the censures of the Maoist literary line and, as some of its exponents have argued, was more influenced by translations of

contemporary Western literature than any indigenous literary models. Although the innovations sought by the short-storywriters publishing in Jintian were to be assimilated into the mainstream of PRC fiction in the mid-1980s when Maoist Discourse was gradually eroded from its dominant position, an analysis based on short stories from 1979 shows that a gulf of acceptability existed between the didactic conformism of official fiction and the aesthetic experimentalism of nonofficial fiction.

Appendix:

List of Short Stories in the Database

RENMIN WENXUE:

(1) Shao Wu and Hui Lin, "Hujiang xing" (Song of the Brave General), 1:26-36.
(2) Ji Guanwu, "Chandou zaoshu" (Broad Beans Ripen Early), 1:37-54.
(3) Ren Dalin, "Xinzhong de baihua" (Hundred Flowers in the Heart), 1:68-77.
(4) Ai Wu, "Huanxiangji" (The Return Home), 1:78-88.
(5) Zhou Xigao, "'Chen Laodun' he tade duixiang" ("Old Squatty Chen" and His Girlfriend), 1:89-94.
(6) Lin Shuhua, "Huasilong de mingyun" (Fate of the Filigree Dragon), 1:104-112.

(7) Yu Lin, "Guoji beige" (International Elegy), 2:46-60.
(8) Ru Zhijuan, "Jianji cuole de gushi" (The Wrongly Edited Story), 2:65-76.
(9) Shu Qun, "Tiweiding de gushi" (A Story as yet Untitled), 2:90-94.
(10) Cong Weixi, "Jiebai de shuilianhua" (The Pure White Water Lily), 2:97-106.

(11) Zhang Xian, "Jiyi" (Memory), 3:13-19.
(12) Zhang Bin, "Qingchun chaqu" (Interlude of Youth), 3:21-37.
(13) Yan Zemin, "Ai yu zeng" (Love and Hate), 3:45-52.
(14) Su Ce, "Zhong wuqi" (Heavy Weapons), 3:53-61.
(15) Ma Shitu, "Wode diyige laoshi" (My First Teacher), 3:69-75.
(16) Zhang Wu, "Xuanju xinduiwei de shihou" (On Electing the New Team Committee), 3:76-80.
(17) Wang Anyou, "Xiang duixiang" (Looking Over a Boyfriend), 3:81-89, 37.

(18) Han Shaogong, "Yuelan" (Yuelan), 4:30-37.
(19) Fan Tiesheng, "Aza yu Hali" (Aza and Hali), 4:70-82, 93.
(20) Wang Jiabin, "Shuipingjiao" (Horizon Reef), 4:83-93.

(21) Li Dong and Wang Yungao, "Caiyungui" (Rosy Clouds Return), 5:27-46, 74.
(22) Mo Shen, "Chongtu" (Conflict), 5:56-64.
(23) Ma Feng, "Xinren duizhang Qian Laoda" (Old Man Qian - The Newly Appointed Team Leader), 5:68-74.
(24) Xin Ruzhong and Li Chengcai, "Meijiu xianhua" (Fine Wine and Fresh Flowers), 5:75-80.
(25) Wang Yaping, "Tebie xingdong" (Special Operations), 5:81-86.
(26) Ji Enshou, "Yizhang tidan" (Bill of Lading), 5:90-94.

(27) Zou Zhi'an, "Tudi" (Land), 6:12-24.
(28) Ling Yufei, "Yangfengwan" (Windy Bay), 6:25-35.
(29) Shi Tuo, "Li He de meng" (Li He's Dream), 6:36-46.
(30) Ye Weilin, "Lanlan de mulanxi" (Blue Magnolia Brook), 6:47-58.
(31) Lin Daren, "'Geming geci chuangzuofa'" ("How to Write Revolutionary Lyrics"), 6:64-68.

(32) You Fengwei, "Bai Lianlian" (Bai Lianlian), 6:86-90.
(33) Han Zuoli, "'Xiaomideng' shi shagua ma?" (Is "Little Gawper" an Idiot?), 6:94-97.
(34) Liu Xinwu, "Wo ai meipian lüye" (I Love Every Green Leaf), 6:100-107.

(35) Jiang Zilong, "Qiao Changzhang shangrenji" (Manager Qiao Takes Office), 7:3-26.
(36) Zhang Tianmin, "Zhanshi tongguo leiqu" (Soldiers Crossing a Minefield), 7:27-36.
(37) Chen Zhongshi, "Xinren" (Trust), 7:37-41.
(38) Deng Youmei, "Fuxiao jiu yao jingong" (Attack at Dawn), 7:66-75.
(39) Chen Minfan, "Qiyi de mingling" (Strange Orders), 7:76-78.
(40) Miao Ge, "Xingqiri" (Sunday), 7:88-93.
(41) Bao Chuan, "Ban hunshi de nianqingren" (Young People Planning a Wedding), 7:94-98.
(42) Shu Qun, "Siyi" (Reminiscing), 7:99-103.

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